

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES



3 3433 08237683 5



Jarnatt

AN





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE

L I F E

OF THE REVEREND

DEVEREUX JARRATT,

Rector of Bath Parish, Dinwiddie County, Virginia.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS ADDRESSED TO THE

Rev. John Coleman,

One of the Ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in Maryland.

BALTIMORE:

PRINTED BY WARNER & HANNA.

1806.

RC

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

332464A

ASTOR, LENOX &
TILDEN FOUNDATION

R 1927 L

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX &
TILDEN FOUNDATION

R 1927 L

TO THE READER.

BIOGRAPHY is justly considered one of the most entertaining kinds of history, and if the characters are such as have, through many difficulties, been raised up to great and distinguished usefulness in their day and station, and are eminent for piety and virtue, what can be more interesting or tend more powerfully to excite others to go and do likewise?

Friendly Reader, you are here presented with a character of this description. This book contains a plain, artless, unadorned account of the life and experience of the Rev. **DEVEREUX JARRRATT**, who after having served his generation faithfully in his station, now rests from his labors. The memorial of virtue is immortal, it is approved of God and of men.

The manuscript, in his own hand writing, has been in my possession several years before his decease, and esteemed by me as a treasure of no small value, had it never transpired, but being left with me for publication after his death, I consider it a deposit of too sacred a nature to be neglected.

From some unavoidable circumstances it has been delayed longer than I could have wished. In the mean while, pressing solicitations, not a few, have been addressed to me to have it published. I consider it therefore a duty I owe to the public, as well as respect to the memory of a deceased friend and father in Christ, to send it forth into the world, for the instruction of all who may be disposed to read it.

The author's desire has in every particular been complied with. It was printed from the manuscript in his own

hand writing—a few notes are added by way of explanation only.

A long life spent in indefatigable labors to promote the best interests of mankind, evinces that the prevailing desire of his heart was to be useful while he lived, and hereby (as also by his other writings) though dead he yet speaketh.

The early part of his life was before my time, but the account is so artless, and accords so well with the simplicity of manners which, it may be presumed, then and there prevailed, that it speaks for itself, and needs no comment....and from the well known character of the Reverend Author, the reader may rest assured that he is not perusing a fictitious tale, but a faithful narrative.

In several of the letters he appeals to me, as being well acquainted with the facts stated. It may be satisfactory to the reader, to be informed that I lived with him several years under his tuition, and before and after that period was well acquainted with his manner of life, and I can and do affirm to the best of my recollection that the facts for which he appeals to me, are faithfully and accurately stated.

Mr. Jarratt meddled very little with politics. He had enough to do to attend to the duties of his profession. He considered himself as an ambassador for Christ. His business was to call sinners to repentance, and teach mankind the way of Salvation without regard to parties or opinions. Had he been asked what countryman he was? In the spirit of universal philanthropy he might have answered like Socrates, the Athenian philosopher, "I am a citizen of the world." But when the rights of his country were invaded, or her interests endangered, the *Amor Patriæ* that dwelt in his breast, would not permit him to be an unconcerned looker-on. Many circumstances took place during the revolution, and are well known in Virginia, which unite to evince his attachment to the interests of America.

When the governor of Virginia left the seat of government, and issued a proclamation for all the loyalists to join him, it was judged necessary to guard the sea-port towns from depredations. Many of his parishioners, and even his pupils, turned out as volunteers in defence of their country, and with his approbation. I remember the circumstances well, being out myself in 1776, and a fellow student of mine (Mr. Daniel Epps) read the declaration of independence to the army. During the contest between

England and America his dress was generally home-spun. By precept and example he encouraged economy, frugality and industry. I have often heard him recommend these virtues to his fellow-citizens, and even to "go *patch upon patch* rather than suffer their just rights to be infringed." As to his person he was a little below the middle stature in height, but lusty...he had a manly appearance....he was of a chearful temper, and though corpulent, active and lively...he was blest with a most retentive memory, a sound judgment, and a power of voice which few possess, over which he had entire command. In the reading desk and in the pulpit he was in his element. All that sat under his ministry can bear witness to his zeal and affection in dispensing the word of life. He was raised up by Divine Providence, and rendered a fit instrument to sound the gospel trumpet, which during a long life he continued to do with the utmost fidelity and diligence. His aim was not to amuse for the moment, but to convince his hearers of the necessity of experimental and practical religion. For his doctrine I refer the reader to his writings, particularly his three volumes of sermons.

He was blest with a great share of health and domestic happiness ...he was an affectionate husband, a kind master, and a sincere friend. His character accords well with the description St. Paul has given of a Christian Bishop. 1 Tim. 3, 2, &c.

He mentions the number of communicants he had, and expresses the great comfort and satisfaction he enjoyed, together with them, in the harmony and love that prevailed. During this happy period, these times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, which many never will forget, his labours were more abundant, and he was held in high estimation by all in his own parish and round about, who had any regard for religion. "Father Jarratt, that good man," was the indearing appellation by which he was distinguished; and so it continued until a spirit of division and party took place, the fatal effects of which he describes: after that he met with unfriendly treatment, of which he complains, not without cause.

Some time before his death he was exercised in the school of affliction. The tumor on the side of his face which he mentions in several of the letters, proved a tedious and severe affliction, and terminated in his death.... but his faith and patience appeared never to fail him....he

expressed entire resignation to the divine will, and departed this life on the 29th of January, 1801, in the 69th year of his age.

After the letters addressed to me, a few letters on important subjects in divinity, addressed to a friend, are added....they were all written by the same hand, and breathe the same spirit, and will not be unacceptable to the pious reader, in which I am persuaded all moderate Calvinists and Arminians will agree. Praying it may be rendered a blessing to you, I subscribe myself your friend, &c.

John Coleman.



The owner is requested to correct the following Errata :

- Page 23, line 10, instead of *doings* read *doing so*.
35, line 15, for *sufferings* read *sufficiency*.
98, line 19, for *souls* read *seals*.
103, line 13, add *a* between *in* and *judgment*.
124, line 19, instead of *professions* read *professors*.
201, line 19, read it *final good*.
205, line 22, before *contradiction* add *a*.
do. line 21, read it *involuntary*.

And the following in Thoughts on Divinity:

- Page 31, lines 14 and 23, for *Cavinists* read *Calvinists*.
37, line 6, for *knew* read *new*.
56, line 7, instead of *or* read *of*.

THE LIFE

OF THE

Reverend Devereux Jarratt.



Virginia, October 24, 1794.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THE present time being marked with peculiar traits of impiety, and such an almost universal inattention to the concerns of religion prevailing, that very few will attend, except on Sundays, to hear the word of God, I have, for a while, desisted from travelling, and making any appointments, on week days, for preaching,—except on funeral occasions. Consequently, I have more leisure and retirement now, than at any period since the commencement of my ministry in this place. I am indeed become a mere recluse. I have dismissed all my pupils,—my family consists only of my wife, her cousin, and myself: and, what is unusual, we have had,

of late, but few visitors, except some of the poor neighbours, who apply to my wife for food, physic and direction, according to their complaints and necessities.

In this recess, I am not idle. I consider idleness as a crime of no small magnitude. But I have no inclination to *idleness*, and am so far from wishing for a licence to indulge myself in *it*, that I find it an insupportable drudgery to be confined to a state of inactivity, or absolute disengagement.

My age and infirmities might, with a shew of justice, plead for some relaxation. I do, in good truth, very sensibly experience a number of those attendants on old age, which the wise king so elegantly paints in the 12th chapter of *Ecclesiastes*. I am just now entering on the grand *Climacteric*. At least, I shall enter on it, in less than two months. I know not that my *intellectuals* are in the least impaired. My judgment, memory, reason, and the powers of imagination are yet intire. I cannot, therefore, say, *the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars are, as yet, darkened*—but I too feelingly experience, that, *the clouds return after rain*:—I find one complaint treading on the heel of another. I can say also, with great propriety, *the keepers of the house tremble,—the strong men bow them-*

selves,—the grinders cease, because they are few, and those that look out of the window are darkened.—My hands tremble and shake,—my knees, legs and ancles support the body with feebleness and pain,—my teeth are reduced to a small number, and the grinders cease to perform their office of mastication; and what remain are literally *few*:—the sight of mine eyes has long since failed me. I have used spectacles for near twenty years.

But in the next sentence of his animated description, the royal preacher takes his leave of me. For, my hearing being now as quick, my ear, relish, and, perhaps, voice as good for music, as ever, I cannot say, *the daughters of music are brought low*. For the perfection of *this sense* of hearing, I hope I am thankful.—When I say I have still a good ear for music, and relish for harmonious sounds, I need not tell you I mean vocal music and such only as is employed in the solemn worship of God.—In my younger days, it is true, I learned to play on the violin: yet, after I came to serious reflection, and saw the pernicious use, to which the music of that instrument was generally applied, I conscientiously laid it aside, and to this day, I shut my ears against it. I think I have not heard a tune

on the violin, more than once, for near 30 years.—But I am rambling from the point in view, and must correct myself.

I was telling you my present situation, immured, for the most part, within the walls of my own house—that I consider idleness as a great fault—an irreconcilable enemy to innocence—and how averse I am to a state of inactivity. I am therefore endeavouring, in my retirement, still to be doing something, which may be beneficial to myself and others. On this principle, I engaged, two years ago, in writing three volumes of sermons. Two of which, you know have already come out, and the third is in the press. At this time, indeed, neither good books, nor good preaching seem to avail much, yet, I have my hopes, that my labour will not be in vain, and that those plain and pointed discourses will, one day, prove beneficial to some readers.—I have been urged to write more sermons ;—but I think the number already written sufficient to answer the end I designed,* and, perhaps, do as much good, as a greater number. What I may do, should God prolong my life, I cannot now decide, but at present, I have little thought of publishing any more sermons.

* See the preface, Vol. I.

Few clergymen have, I believe, a better library than I have, either in the number or excellency of the books it contains. I spend, and have spent, during my recess, a good deal of my time in reading, sometimes Divinity, and sometimes the Spectator, history, philosophy, &c. The discourses I deliver at my three churches, and funerals, take up but a small portion of my time in preparing them—perhaps, not more than an hour in a month, and for the most part, not a moment. They are all extemporaneous, and I endeavor to accommodate them to my congregation, for the time being. Formerly, I was so confident of having the same hearers every Sunday, if they were well, that I could prepare a suitable discourse at home—but since these times of distraction, or division, I seldom have the same hearers two Sundays together, so that I cannot so well fix on any particular subject for premeditation : and when I have premeditated on a subject, it has often happened, when I have got to church, so unsuitable to the audience, that I have laid it aside, and spoke from the first text that offered, which I judged more proper for the hearers.

These things considered, it will appear

I have more time for reading, than can well be employed in that exercise. I cannot always read, as I find sitting long over a book of any sort, is apt to create drowsiness; I need a change of employ, and as I have no turn at all for farming, I find it necessary to divide all my time between *reading* and *writing*; in the latter of which, it appears, I could continue eighteen hours without the least drowsiness, though I find it fatiguing to the hand and eyes, and is sometimes attended with painfulness in the right side of my breast. Time is precious—nothing more so—every portion of it ought to be so filled up as to leave no blanks: this consideration has induced me to spend some part of my time, this fall and winter, in recollecting and writing down some *memoirs* of myself and family, but more particularly what concerns my own life. This, I am persuaded, will be a profitable employment to myself, and, I hope, to you, to whom these sheets are immediately addressed; and, after my *decease*, it may be profitable to others, as I have no objection to the publication of these memoirs then, either wholly and in the shape in which they here stand, or in part, and in any other shape, which you and my

friend Mr. Duke shall judge best, should you survive me.

I said, I am persuaded this will be a profitable employ to myself, in as much as it has a tendency to inspire my heart with sincere love and sentiments of ardent gratitude to my kind *Benefactor*, while I recollect and record *his* providential care of, and gracious goodness toward me, from the beginning, in blessing me with those natural faculties of body and mind, which I have possest, and still retain—in visiting my dark, untutored soul, with the rays of his enlightening and quickning grace—in calling my attention to things divine and eternal—shewing me my guilt, my danger, and my remedy—in giving me any sense of his pardoning love and mercy, through Jesus Christ—in raising me from the depths of obscurity, and the lowest walks of life, to such a distinguished place and station in his house and family—and though, like *Amos*, I was no prophet, nor prophet's son, yet hath he appointed me to speak to the people, in his name, and honored me with a *commission* and *office*, which I consider of higher dignity and greater importance, than those of all ambassadors, plenipotentiaries, or envoys extraordinary, among the states and kingdoms of this world—and in crown-

ing my negociations, with mankind, with any degree of success—in owning my mission, and setting so many seals to it. O may He still direct me in this undertaking, smile upon, and render it a blessing to writer and reader.

I begin, as is usual in works of this sort, with my birth and parentage.

I was born in *New Kent*, a county in Virginia, about 25 miles below Richmond, on January 6th, 1732-3, O. S. I was the youngest child of *Robert Farratt* and *Sarah* his wife. My grand-father was an Englishman, born, I believe, in the city of *London*, in *Devereux* county, in *Essex-Street*, which is so called from *Robert Devereux*, Earl of *Essex*. From this circumstance, perhaps, or from his being a soldier in the army of the Earl of *Essex*, he named his first son *Robert*, and his second son *Devereux*. He had only these two sons and one daughter, who was married to *Walter Clifton*, of *New Kent*. But from whencesoever the name *Devereux* was derived, it is certain, as far as I have known, or heard, my uncle was the first who had that name in *Virginia*, or even in *America*, and it was confined to our family for 50 or 60 years. But after I became minister of this parish (*Bath*,) a number of people, out of re-

spect to me, called one of their sons after my name.

My grand-mother, as I was told, was a native of *Ireland*. Both she and my grandfather died before I was born, and I have had no account of them, except that they were poor people, but industrious, and rather rough in their manners. They acquired a pretty good tract of land, of near 1200 acres, but they had no slaves — probably they were prejudiced against that kind of property. The family of the Jarratt's have been remarkably short lived, and very few of the name are to be found now living.

My father was brought up to the trade of a carpenter, at which he wrought till the very day before he died. He was a mild, inoffensive man, and much respected among his neighbors. My mother was the daughter of Joseph Bradley, of *Charles City*, a county bordering on *New Kent*. None of my ancestors, on either side, were either rich or great, but had the character of honesty and industry, by which they lived in credit among their neighbors, free from real want, and above the frowns of the world. This was also the habit, in which my parents were. They always had plenty of plain food and raiment, wholesome and

good, suitable to their humble station, and the times in which they lived. Our food was altogether the produce of the farm, or plantation, except a little sugar, which was rarely used ; and our raiment was altogether my mother's manufacture, except our hats and *shoes*, the *latter* of which we never put on, but in the winter season. We made no use of *tea* or *coffee* for breakfast, or at any other time ; nor did I know a single family that made any use of them. Meat, bread and milk was the ordinary food of all my acquaintance. I suppose the *richer sort* might make use of *those* and other luxuries, but to such people I had no access. We were accustomed to look upon, what were called *gentle folks*, as beings of a superior order. For my part, I was quite shy of *them*, and kept off at a humble distance. A *periwig*, in those days, was a distinguishing badge of *gentle folk*—and when I saw a man riding the road, near our house, with a wig on, it would so alarm my fears, and give me such a disagreeable feeling, that, I dare say, I would run off, as for my life. Such ideas of the difference between *gentle* and *simple*, were, I believe, universal among all of my rank and age. But I have lived to see, a vast alteration, in this respect, and the contrary,

extreme prevail. In our high *republican times*, there is more *levelling* than ought to be, consistent with good government. I have as little notion of oppression and tyranny as any man, but a due subordination is essentially requisite in every government. At present, there is too little regard and reverence paid to magistrates and persons in public office ; and whence do this disregard and irreverence originate, but from the notion and practice of levelling ? An idea is held out to us, that our present government and laws are far superior to the former, when we were under the royal administration ; but my age enables me to know, that the people are not now, by half, so quietly and peaceably governed as formerly ; nor are the laws, perhaps by the tenth part, so well executed. And yet I allow the superiority of our present government. In theory, it is certainly superior ; but in practice it is not so. This can arise from nothing so much as the want of a proper distinction, between the various orders of the people. But here I am rambling again, and must come back to my tract.

My parents neither sought nor expected any titles, honors, or great things, either for themselves or children. Their highest ambition was to teach their children to read,

write, and understand the fundamental rules of arithmetic. I remember also, they taught us short prayers, and made us very perfect in repeating the *Church Catechism*. They wished us all to be brought up in some honest calling, that we might earn our bread, by the sweat of our brow, as they did. Two of their children died in infancy, before I was born ; and only four lived to years of maturity, three sons and a daughter. I was a great favorite, as being the youngest.

When I was between six and seven years of age, I had the misfortune to lose my father, by a very sudden stroke. I remember, on the morning, in which he died, I saw him go out of the house, about his business, as usual, and by nine o'clock I saw him expiring in his chamber. His sudden exit was attributed to his taking a dose of *tartar emetic*, as he complained of being something unwell. The remembrance of *this event*, has made me cautious of *tartar* all my days. I never knowingly took a grain of it ; though I suspected that a physician once gave me some of it, in disguise, but it almost put an end to me. It brought on the same symptoms of the cramp and cold sweat, which came on my father, just before he expired—but I, be-

ing of a stronger constitution than he, survived the attack.

My father, dying so suddenly and unexpectedly, had made no will; the consequence was that my elder brother, *Robert*, heired all the landed estate. Of the perishable estate an equal division was made, and my part, as well as the rest, amounted to 25l. current money of Virginia, which I was to receive at the age of twenty-one. This sum would be thought very trifling, at this day, but then it was justly reckoned much more considerable, as all family necessaries were so much cheaper, than now. A horse, which would now sell for 20l. might be bought then for 5l.: a good cow and calf for a pistole, and other things in proportion. I mention these things to shew the difference of the times, and the great fluctuation of human affairs.

Both my brothers were taught the trade of a carpenter and millwright, at which they wrought for the most part of their lives. They both died about the meridian of life. My sister is still living. But I shall say no more of my family—but proceed to those things which more particularly relate to myself.

At a very early period, as I have been told, I discovered a pregnancy of genius,

in some things, not very common, and was frequently called *parson* ; and some of my friends would sometimes say they thought I would be a *parson*. I can myself remember *this* ; and can now recollect that the retentiveness of my memory was very extraordinary. Before I knew the letters of the alphabet, I could repeat a whole chapter in the Bible, at a few times hearing it read, especially if the subject of it struck my fancy. The 16th chapter of Judges, and some other parts of the history of *Samson*, I soon learned to repeat ; because I was so much taken with his strength, exploits, and vengeance on the *Philistines* for his *two eyes*. And the odiousness of *Delilah's* character, who so basely betrayed *him* into the hands of his enemies, made such an impression on my mind, as, I believe, much contributed to that utter abhorrence, which I have had of that kind of *vermin*, all the days of my life.

I had indeed an aptitude in learning several things, but more especially those, in which the memory was mostly concerned. I have never conversed with any person in my life, whose memory seemed equal to mine. Nor did I ever know one, who could repeat so many lines, in an English, or Latin poet, as I could, in the same space ;

of time. My voice was remarkably tuneable, and soft, or sonorous ; as the case required, on which it was exercised. So that as my memory enabled me to repeat the stanzas of the longest *songs*, I could sing them, with an air and grace, which excited attention and admiration. The number of songs, I could repeat and sing, when but a child, might seem incredible to relate. The old song of *Chevy Chase*, which Mr. *Addison* has honoured with a critic in the *Spectator*, and considers as a work of merit and genius, I learned to repeat, and sing, by hearing it a few times only, though it contained near a hundred stanzas. The traces made on my brain, by the chapters and songs I then learned to repeat, have never been erased to the present moment. As what I have here said respecting my memory, &c. relate merely to gifts of nature, which I had no hand in acquiring, there can be no vanity in writing them down. But I cannot help regretting, that I had no better subjects offered for a display of such talents, than paltry *songs*, as most of *those* were, which then took my attention.

At 8 or 9 years old, I was sent to an English school in the neighbourhood :— and I continued to go to one teacher and

other, as opportunity served, (though not without great interruptions) till I was 12 or 13. In this time I learned to read in the Bible, (though but indifferently) and to write a sorry scrawl, and acquired some knowledge of Arithmetic. With this small fund, I left school; and my mother dying about this time, no farther care was bestowed on my education.

I now fell into the hands of my eldest brother. In his way, he was exceeding kind to me. He allowed me in all the indulgences a depraved nature, and an evil heart could desire. I mean, he was at no pains to correct my morals, or restrain me from any of the vices of the times. I followed the way of my own heart, and walked in the sight of mine own eyes, not considering, as every one ought, *that for all these things God would bring me into judgment.* While with my brother, I was employed in three kinds of business. 1. In keeping and exercising race-horses for the turf. 2. In taking care of, and preparing game-cocks for a match and main. 3. In ploughing, harrowing and other plantation work. The two first were then agreeable enough—but the last, in which I was the most constantly employed, was very irksome. Thus I continued, till about 17 years of age,

when I was allowed to quit the plough, and to betake myself to the business of a carpenter, with my second brother *Joseph*. But he was fractious, and often had recourse to hard words and severe blows. These I did not at all relish : but I continued to labour with him till the latter end of the year 1750, or 1751.

Before I proceed, I must take a little time to reflect on the danger of my situation, at that period. During the 5 or 6 years, I continued with my brothers, I do not remember ever to have seen or heard any thing of a religious nature ; or that tended to turn my attention to the great concerns of eternity. I know not, that I ever heard any serious conversation respecting God and Christ, Heaven and Hell. There was a church, in the parish, within three miles of me, and a great many people attended it, every Sunday. But I went not once in a year. And if I had gone ever so often, I should not have been much the wiser : for the parish minister was but a poor preacher—very unapt to teach or even to gain the attention of an audience. Being very near-sighted, and preaching wholly by a written copy, he kept his eyes continually fixed on the paper, and so near, that what he said seemed rather address

to the cushion, than to the congregation. Except at a time, when he might have a quarrel with any body—then he would straiten up, and speak lustily, that all might distinctly hear. I remember to have heard, he had once a quarrel with his clerk, and strove hard in vestry to turn the poor man out of his place ; but failed in the attempt. The next Sunday he had prepared a scolding for him, and did vilify him stoutly, right over his head. The clerk sat it out to the last ; and as soon as the angry sermon ended, he rose up, according to custom, to sing a psalm. He wished to return the *parson* like for like, but was not allowed, there, to say any thing, but was contained within the lids of the Prayer-Book. However, to suit the discourse and pay the minister in kind, he gave out the 2d psalm, and with an audible voice, read the first stanza thus,

With restless and ungovern'd *rage*,
Why do the heathen *storm* ?
Why in such rash *attempts* engage,
As they can ne'er *perform*.

The parson saw what he was at, and ordered another psalm. This is no fiction. And what is to be expected from such pastors.

In circumstances so unpromising, it is not very wonderful, that I remained ignorant of God, and careless about religion. I only copied the example of my *elders* and *superiors*; and the example of such has great influence, especially a bad example. But so far were those, who ought to have set me a good example, and restrained me from the company, the *conversation* and the *practice* of the ungodly, from doings, that, by precept and example, I was directly led into all *these*, and encouraged therein. *Cards, racing, dancing, &c.* which are still the favourite sport and diversion of the wicked and ungodly, were then much in vogue. In these I partook, as far as my time and circumstances would permit, as well on Sundays as any other day. In these I vainly sought my felicity, but never found.

The blessed *author* of my being, who made me for *himself*, and ordained that I should seek happiness in *him*, was forgotten—though, blessed be his goodness, he did not, even then, leave me without a witness, and I was less free from inward, than outward restraint. Conscience would check, and I had, at times, awful forebodings of a judgment to come. The thoughts of death were terrible, and every threatening dispensation gave great alarm.

to the cushion, than to the congregation. Except at a time, when he might have a quarrel with any body—then he would straiten up, and speak lustily, that all might distinctly hear. I remember to have heard, he had once a quarrel with his clerk, and strove hard in vestry to turn the poor man out of his place ; but failed in the attempt. The next Sunday he had prepared a scolding for him, and did vilify him stoutly, right over his head. The clerk sat it out to the last ; and as soon as the angry sermon ended, he rose up, according to custom, to sing a psalm. He wished to return the *parson* like for like, but was not allowed, there, to say any thing, but was contained within the lids of the Prayer-Book. However, to suit the discourse and pay the minister in kind, he gave out the 2d psalm, and with an audible voice, read the first stanza thus,

With restless and ungovern'd *rage*,
Why do the heathen *storm* ?
Why in such rash *attempts* engage,
As they can ne'er *perform*.

The parson saw what he was at, and ordered another psalm. This is no fiction. And what is to be expected from such pastors.

In circumstances so unpromising, it is not very wonderful, that I remained ignorant of God, and careless about religion. I only copied the example of my *elders* and *superiors*; and the example of such has great influence, especially a bad example. But so far were those, who ought to have set me a good example, and restrained me from the company, the *conversation* and the *practice* of the ungodly, from doings, that, by precept and example, I was directly led into all *these*, and encouraged therein. *Cards, racing, dancing, &c.* which are still the favourite sport and diversion of the wicked and ungodly, were then much in vogue. In these I partook, as far as my time and circumstances would permit, as well on Sundays as any other day. In these I vainly sought my felicity, but never found.

The blessed *author* of my being, who made me for *himself*, and ordained that I should seek happiness in *him*, was forgotten—though, blessed be his goodness, he did not, even then, leave me without a witness, and I was less free from inward, than outward restraint. Conscience would check, and I had, at times, awful forebodings of a judgment to come. The thoughts of death were terrible, and every threatening dispensation gave great alarm.

sisted in such things, as made no great baggage, for I think I carried the whole on my back, except one shirt. In this plight, I took my departure from the place of my nativity. My whole dress and apparel consisted in a pair of coarse breeches, one or two oznaburgs shirts, a pair of shoes and stockings, an old felt hat, a bear skin *coat*, which, by the by, was the first coat I ever had made for me, since my childhood. And that I might appear something more than common, in a strange place, and be counted somebody, I got me an old wig, which, perhaps being cast off by the master, had become the property of his slave, and from the slave it was conveyed to me. But people were not obliged, you know, to ask how I came by it, and, I suppose, I was wise enough not to tell them. I had not, however, a farthing of money, and, I believe, I had never owned five shillings cash in all my life. I had neither *horse* nor *saddle*; but my brother lent me *both*, which I was to return in a month or two. On the second or third day, after I sat out, I arrived at *Moon's* place of residence. *Moon* was then an overseer for Col. Richard Cocke, of *Surrey* county. We soon entered on the business of raising a school. But I quickly discovered the number of pupils,

would be far short of what I had been made to expect. The prospect was gloomy and forbidding, at that time, nor did it brighten much for some years, yet I have reason to adore the providence of God, that brought me here.

I opened my little school, though the promised income, as might be foreseen, would scarce afford me clothing of the coarsest sort. However I was content with a little, which I could call my own. I behaved so well in my new station, that I gained the confidence of *Moon*, so far, that he trusted me with as much checks, as made me two new shirts. This was something better than I had been used to before. I considered myself well of, as I never looked for, or expected great matters. But on my way to New Kent, where I was obliged to go, to return my brother's horse and saddle, at the time appointed, I had the sad misfortune to lose one of my new shirts, which I never recovered again. The place of which I was obliged to supply with one made of very rough oznaburgs, as I would not extravagantly impose on the kindness and generosity of my landlord, (*Moon*) by asking credit for another check shirt. I was contented and cheerful from day to day.

With respect to religious advantages, my situation was not at all mended, but rather worse. Moon's family, in which I lived, were just as ignorant of religion, as I was, and as careless about it. And as Albemarle was then nearly a frontier county, the manners of the people were generally more rough and uncivilized, than in the more interior parts of the country. In the interior counties, there were churches and ministers to perform divine service every Sunday. But in Albemarle, there was no minister of any persuasion, or any public worship, within many miles. The Sabbath day was usually spent in *sporting*: and whether *this* was right or wrong, I believe, no one questioned.

Some time, in the course of that year, Mr. Whitefield's eight sermons, preached in *Glasgow*, were left, by some one, at *Moon's*. This being the first sermon book I ever had seen, or, perhaps, heard of, I had the curiosity to look into it. I was but a poor reader, and understood little of what I did read. And what I did understand, in those sermons, had no effect—supposing I had no concern in the contents, as the *author*, I was told, was a *New-light*, and consequently what *he* said was nothing to *Churchmen*. I wish such ignorance had

been peculiar to myself. But it is a reigning evil, of very extensive influence, and is very pernicious to mankind. It would be well if people would examine, not who wrote, or said this or that, but whether what is said or written be agreeable to the word of God, and the standard of truth.

My constitution had been always strong, and I had seldom known what sickness was. But, living now on the banks of James River, and between two bold creeks, called *Bremo*, which ran into the river above and below the house, I was violently attacked with a quotidian ague, which, in a little while, changed to a tertian, and, at last, terminated in a *quartan*, which followed me eight or nine months. In the paroxysms I frequently wept, at the thought of my being in a land of strangers, at a great distance from the place of my nativity, and my nearest relations ; but of *God*, and my estrangement and distance from *him*, of the salvation of my soul and a future state, I had little or no concern. Such a degree of blindness and insensibility had fallen upon me.

When my year expired, at Moon's, my ague still continuing, I thought it advisable to move my quarters, and get a school at another place. I did so. Here again

my expectation failed me, as my *second* school was less profitable than the *first*. The *first* brought me in 9l. the second, 7l. I boarded altogether with *Moon* the first year, but now my quarters were more unsettled : I was to board among my employers, proportioning the time to the number of the children, they sent. I first took up at the house of one *Abraham Childers*. Here I wished to pitch my tent for the whole year, as I found the manners of that family very much to the taste of my depraved mind. I always had a great turn for *merriment, banter, buffoonery* and such like. The members of the family had the same turn, consequently we met the approbation of each other. As my ambition was always to excel in every thing, I had a mind to, so I strove to excel in *these*, and every other species of levity and folly. And I did excel so much, that, whether from envy, or something else, I sometimes met with a check, or kind of reproof, even from the members of that ungodly family. In the time of my residence here, I met with considerable hardships, which, together with the quartan ague, which regularly continued its periodical attacks, were enough, one would think, to have cowed any spirit less audacious than mine ; but all had n

effect on me ; I continued thoughtless of my Maker and the interests of my soul.

Having finished the quota of time, I had to stay in this family ; my quarters were to be moved. I did move, but with great reluctance. However, in the issue, this movement proved a peculiar blessing to me.

I went now to board with a gentleman, whose name was *Cannon*. He was a man of great possessions, in lands, slaves, &c. &c. As I had been always very shy of *gentlefolk*, and had never been accustomed to the company and conversation of the rich, you may imagine, how awkwardly, and with what confusion, I entered his house. There was another very fearful circumstance, which added to my perplexity : for I had been told, that the lady of the house was a *New-light*, and of sentiments so rigid and severe, that all levities of every kind must be banished from her presence, and every species of ungodliness must expect a sharp reproof from her. I was put upon some serious reflections, and considerations, how to demean myself, in her presence, so as to give no cause for reproof, and also induce the pious matron to think I was not destitute of religion. This put me upon a *project* entirely new to me, I mean, *to act the hypocrite*. I had no in-

tention of being religious, but wished to appear so, in order to gain her good opinion. O how thoughtless—how inconsiderate—how foolish is man! While I restrained myself, that I might appear fair in the eyes of a worm, like myself—I considered not that I was, at all times, exposed to the view of that Holy Being, to whom I must render an account for all my words and actions.

It was on a Sunday, P. M. when I first came to the house—an entire stranger, both to the gentleman and his lady. Though they had sent their niece and daughter to me, for about three months, yet I had no personal acquaintance with them, as the school had been made up, without my presence. The interview, on my part, was the more awkward, as I knew not how to introduce myself to strangers, and what style was proper for accosting persons of their dignity. However I made bold to enter the door, and was viewed, in some measure, as a phenomenon. The gentleman took me, (if I rightly remember) for the son of a very poor man, in the neighbourhood, but the lady, having some hint, I suppose, from the children, rectified the mistake, and cried out, *it is the school-master.*

I found her reading a religious book, and the gravity of her appearance, gave me an unusual feeling, which, perhaps, might increase the disadvantage, under which I appeared. I felt miserable, and said little, the whole evening. I was truly out of my element, and was glad, when the morning arose, to get off to my little school, that I might, once more, be from under the eye of restraint.

The custom of this lady was, as I soon discovered, to read a sermon, in *Flavel*, every night—to which she wished me to attend. I had, indeed, little relish for such entertainment, yet, agreeable to my purpose of playing the hypocrite, and gaining a favourable opinion, I affected a very close attention. And that I might excel in this art, and more effectually answer my purpose, I would sometimes, after a long discourse was finished (Flavel's sermon's being all lengthy) ask her to read another—though, probably, I understood not the tenth part of what was read. Flavel's sermons are too experimental and evangelical, for one, so ignorant of divine things, as I was, to comprehend. When she was weary of reading, she would ask me to read in my turn. But so poor a hand did I make of the business, that reader and

hearer were rather abashed, than edified. Yet I could not decently refuse. She soon desisted asking me to read, and took the whole task on herself. This custom continued for six or eight weeks, without any other effect on me, but fatigue and drowsiness, which I supported with much fortitude and self-denial, rather than give the least reason for suspicion, that I could be weary of good things. I should, no doubt, have eloped some nights, and passed the evening at my former stand, but as I was to carry the two little girls to school, every day, on horse back, one behind and the other before me, I was obliged to stand to my charge.

But it pleased God, on a certain night, while she was reading, as usual, to draw out my attention, and fix it on the subject, in a manner unknown to me before. The text of the sermon was, “ *Then opened he their understanding :*” From which words were pointed out, what new discoveries would open to the eye of the mind, by means of spiritual illumination, &c. The subject was naturally as dark to me, as any of the former, and yet I felt myself impressed with it, and saw my personal interest in the solemn truths—and truths I believed them to be : But, at the same time, I was

conscious, that I was a stranger to that spiritual illumination and its consequent discoveries, and, of course, was yet in a dark and dangerous state. I must have known before this, that I was a sinner, and all things were not right with me, but nothing ever came home to my heart, so as to make a lasting impression, till now. The impression followed me to bed—arose with me in the morning, and haunted me from place to place, till I resolved to forsake my sins, and try to save my soul.—But my resolution was made in my own strength, for I had not yet learned how weak and frail we are by nature, and that all our suffering is of God.

It may be worthy of remark, that my distress, then, did not arise from a painful sense of any particular sin, or sins in general, but from a full persuasion, that I was a stranger to God and true religion, and was not prepared for death and judgment. The alteration, in my conduct, effected by these impressions on the mind, soon became visible to my benefactress, which was matter of great joy. And as she was the first I had ever known to be truly and experimentally acquainted with *vital religion*, and I was the first she had ever seen in her family, who was desirous

to be acquainted with the *same*, she was not willing I should go away, till the year was ended, to board any where else. Accordingly I spent the rest of the year there.

My religious concern continued, during my abode here, but not at all times alike. I went altogether on a legal, self-sufficient plan—I asked mercy of God, but not for grace to help in time of need. The consequence was, that the best resolutions I made, were too weak to bear the shock of temptation, and I was too often carried into such extravagancies from the right, that all my hopes were slain, and I had all my religion to begin afresh. I strove against sin and folly, but got no ground, because I strove in my own strength. Sometimes I seemed to stand fast, for a few days—and then be overtaken in a fault, which would throw me back again. I remember once, being in bad company, I acted so contrary to my resolutions, that, on reflection, I ran, and leapt, tore my hair, and cried out, like one distracted. The power of sin and natural inclination to indulge myself, as formerly, were so strong, and would make such violent struggles for gratification, that, at times, I was ready to give up the contest, and all farther efforts in religion. But this thought would immediately occur,

Damnation will be the consequence—This I could not bear, and therefore still resolved to strive, rather than *burn in hell to all eternity*.

I had never heard the gospel preached in all my life, nor had I an opportunity of hearing it. All the external helps, I had, were my landlady and Flavel's sermons. These sermons were explicit enough in pointing out the lost and helpless state of man—the necessity of divine aid, and of a better righteousness, than I could furnish:—yet I could not readily comprehend this, nor easily correct that *legal bias*, which is so natural to all men. I had no conception of being *justified* by the righteousness of Christ, or any other righteousness but my own. On these accounts, my religion continued in a state of fluctuation for a great while. I had religion enough to make me frequently uneasy—but never to make me happy. Sinning and repenting—repenting and sinning was the round, in which I went for many months. Yet it was apparent that there was a change in my life, for the better.

This was the state, in which I was, at the conclusion of that year—when necessity obliged me to change my place of abode. I mentioned above, that my *school* here was

small, and the *income* about 7l. and I found it would be still less, should I continue another year. So I looked out for a school some where else. *Moon* wished to employ me again, and I went there, with the prospect of having a greater number of pupils, than before. I now got a school of twelve or thirteen scholars, at twenty shillings per scholar, which was the usual price, in those days. I again boarded with *Moon* all that year.

Remembering how blind, careless and insensible *Moon* and the rest of his family were, respecting religion, when I lived there before, and, seeing no alteration for the better, I was concerned for their souls, and did what I could to make them sensible of the danger they were in:—*But they made light of it*—turned all off with a laugh—imputing the whole to *new-light cant*—which they supposed I had caught from *Mrs. Cannon*, the lady of whom I have spoken. *Moon* and his wife, being *Church people*, as they said, could listen to nothing but what came through that channel. But, in truth, they knew no more of the principles of the *Church of England*, than of any other—and this case is not peculiar to them, but is very common in the world.

I was myself, at that time, but little acquainted with the principles of the church. Nor did I understand the meaning of many scriptures, which I read, but I understood enough to know, that except we *repent*, we must perish—and except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God. These truths I insisted on, in the family, and especially the necessity of being *born again*. This they did not deny, “We must all be *born again*,” said they, “but that is to be after we are dead.”

I wished to be better acquainted with the meaning of the scriptures. I wanted some instructor. I had not a single book in the world, nor was I able to buy any books, had I known of any for sale. But, by some means, I got hold of a little old book, in a smoky condition, which I found to be *Russel's* seven sermons. I borrowed the book, and read the sermons again and again. This book was of much service to me; and I remember I was deeply imprest with the account of *Francis Spira*, which is given in one of the Sermons. But I still wanted help in understanding the scriptures. I had never heard of any expositor, nor did I know there was any such in the universe: yet I thought it necessary there should be a book of that sort. Mentioning, perhaps,

my desire of an expositor to some person, I was told of a very large *book*, belonging to a gentleman, about five or six miles distant across the river, *which* explained all the New Testament. I resolved to get the reading of that book, if possible. By my living so long with Mr. Cannon, and the resort of gentlemen to his house, I had worn off some of my clownish rusticity, and had become less shy of persons in the upper ranks of life. I, therefore, determined on a visit to the gentleman, who owned the book, and in a short time went to his house. Here I found no less a treasure, than that most excellent *exposition*, called *Burkett* on the New Testament. I asked the loan of it, which was readily granted. And, taking up the *folio* in my arms, I brought home the prize. I was wonderfully pleased with the book, not only for the light and instruction I gained by it, but also because I found the *writer* to have been a minister of the Church—hoping this circumstance would gain the attention of the family to such parts, as I should wish them to hear me read. But it was not so. As I had no candle, my custom was, in an evening, to sit down flat on the hearth, erect the volume on the end of a chest, which stood near, and, by the light of the fire,

read till near midnight. It pleased God mightily to improve my understanding, by these means—and I soon became, what was called a good reader, and my relish for books and reading greatly increased.

I acquired considerable views of the nature and plan of Salvation, through Jesus Christ: but I did not yet think I had attained a living faith in his blood. For some time, I had withdrawn myself from the company of the wicked; had quitted dancing, racing, cards, &c. and, in the course of the year, had, twice or thrice, heard the gospel preached in a lively manner, by a Presbyterian, which much affected me. By such helps, I was kept pretty steady in my religious pursuits, for eight or nine months of that year. But before the close, I met with a dreadful *rebuff*. This circumstance I will simply relate.

My annual income, as already said, had been very small, yet, by frugality, I had saved enough to procure me a small poney and a saddle. I began also to get some credit in a store, and having prospect of getting 13l. at the end of that year, ventured to go in debt for a tolerable suit of cloaths—my linen, on Sundays, was finer

than formerly, and I began, no doubt, to be a little too vain, and to think more highly of myself, than I ought. Thus furnished, I determined on a visit to my friends in *New Kent*. My brothers, whom I dearly loved, still lived *there*, whom I had not seen for a long time, and I believe I was equally beloved by them.

I made the visit, and was received with the utmost cordiality. My brothers and their wives, and all the black people on the plantation, seemed overjoyed at my coming. The pleasure of seeing each other was mutual, and our congratulations are not easily described. Nothing was thought too good for me, which their houses afforded, and they wished to entertain me, in the most agreeable manner. It was in the season of autumn, when the *cellars*, in that quarter, were generally stored with good, sound cider. *These* were set open with great liberality. But, by the bye, this was no great temptation, as you know I am not very fond of spirituous liquors. But they knew I had been very fond of company and merriment, and wished to entertain me with frolic and dance. This proposal I rejected, and told them my reason for so doing. This was a disappointment they did not expect, and they soon disco-

vered there was a great alteration in me, and that my mind was turned to religion. This, I suppose, might put some damp on their spirits, though they allowed that all people ought to be better than they were—but they thought I had overshot the mark, and carried matters quite too far. “We all ought to be good, say they, but sure there can be no harm in *innocent mirth*, such as dancing, drinking and making merry, &c.” I doubt not, but I told them the views I had of such things, and also what I had discovered of my own guilt and danger, and what my determinations were. I talked to them, as well as I knew how, for their profit—but to no good effect. I visited other relations also, and discoursed with them on religious concerns. In a word, I stood fast about five days. But through the influence of my brethren, and their stratagems to take me in, I was insensibly, and at unawares, drawn from my integrity, in the course of one week.

Being one day on a visit to my uncle *Clopton*, I was to return to my brother’s that evening. I did so. But, in my absence, he had contrived to gather a considerable company of people, of different sexes and ages, for the purpose of drinking cider and dancing, as liked them best.

I was surprised, when I rode up, to see such numbers, both within and without doors. Without, the tankard went briskly round, while the sound of music and dancing, was heard within. I was strongly solicited to join the company within—but I held back for some time. But too soon I found the Apostle's words realized, *evil communications corrupt good manners*, for here was I drawn in, once more, to join those vanities and follies, which, I thought, I had forever abandoned. At first I joined with reluctance—but I soon found myself shorn of all my strength, and, like *Samson*, was become weak like another man. And here I was tempted to fix my *staff*, and take up my rest. I thought it vain for me to attempt a religious life any more (at least, as yet) and therefore I might as well give a loose to my passions, and get what little happiness I could in sports and sensual gratifications. From *this night* I had no more to say about religion—my mouth was shut up on that subject.

For two or three months, from that time, I had but little relish for any thing of a religious nature, though I was not without some severe *twinges* of conscience, which I bore without much flinching. I endeavored to be as airy as I could, and as

I possess a great degree of vivacity, and was extremely jocose, my company was very acceptable to the ungodly, and courted by persons much my superior, in family and fortune. This must have been very flattering to my vanity, and tickling to a depraved heart. It was a wonderful mercy, indeed, that I had not, like many others in like circumstances, been carried down the stream, and abandoned religion forever. But, blessed be the Lord, it was not many months before *the snare was broken, and I was delivered.*

From the time I returned from my visit to New Kent, I still boarded with *Moon*. But from some circumstances, I determined to stay there no longer, than till I should finish the year. This determination being made known, Mr. *Cannon* invited me to return to him to teach his little son, who, by this time, was old enough to be put to school. I gladly accepted the invitation, and again took up my residence at his house, where I continued for some years, at the rate of 15*l.* per annum, standing wages.

On my return to this family, I found my *benefactress* as much engaged in religion as before; and her conversation and example

soon revived, in me, my former desires and resolutions. About this time, also, a Presbyterian minister had obtained a settlement in the county of Cumberland, contiguous to Albemarle, and preached, once in four weeks, within four miles of my lodgings. This afforded me better *helps* for religious improvement, than ever I had before. Nor did I neglect *them*. I constantly attended all the sermons, and frequently had the pleasure of the minister's company and conversation, at our house, and also at other houses in the settlement. He was not, indeed, the best of men, nor was he a good preacher—yet I gained considerable advantages by him, as, by his means, I was brought to an acquaintance with a number of very excellent books, written by men of the greatest eminence for learning and piety, such as Baxter, Watts, Doddridge, Young, &c. These I read with pleasure and profit. The preaching of the gospel had also some good effects on several in the neighbourhood; and increased the number of religious *friends*, which I consider as another advantage to me. With *these* I frequently conversed to our mutual edification. And as I neglected none of the public ordinances of religion and means of grace, and

my moral character was irreproachable, I was received and held as a Christian by all the professing people in the different countries where I was known. I believe, indeed, I had true religion then, as far as it went—but was subject to continual doubts, whether to draw the happy conclusion in my favor or not. At times I felt comfortable—but soon sunk in doubts and fears. The stake was of great value, and we can never make too sure of the prize—but a too hasty conclusion, or a decision not well founded, might be attended with fatal consequences. Such considerations prevent many pious souls from drawing a conclusion hastily for fear of a deception, in so weighty a case.

While in this state of suspense, I was assaulted with very uncommon trials; and a perplexing thought followed me, that my case was singular, and that no man in the world had such trials, oppositions and enemies to contend with, as I had. No book I read, no sermon I heard, seemed to touch my perplexing *case*; which might with some shew of reason, confirm me in the singularity of *it*, and cause me to fear there was no promise applicable to *it*. This state of trial, sorrow, trouble and perplexity, continued long and painful—perhaps for twelve

months. But still, I was naturally so vivacious, and had such command on my countenance, hardly any one suspected otherwise, but that I was happy all this while. I never spake to any man respecting it, except the minister, and then but partially. He told me he had been in the same situation, which afforded me some relief for the present, but it lasted not long. The Lord relieved me at last, I well remember the time and place, when and where, I was sitting, with a good *book* in my hand. In *this* I read a great many discouraging cases, described by the author, with the promises adapted to such cases. I paid great attention to every case and promise—and, perhaps, not without hope that God would be my friend. But not finding my case, I was still thinking it nameless, and altogether singular, and consequently, there could be no promise, in the bible, suitable to it. At last I cast my eye on Isaiah 62, 12—*Thou shalt be called, sought out, a city not forsaken.* These words appeared very applicable to a *nameless case*, and I was enabled to apply them as such, to the great comfort of my soul. I saw, and believed, that though my case were *nameless*, and hid from all the men upon earth, yet God knew it, and would search me out for good, and not forsake

me, or give me over into the hand of the enemy. I was blessed with faith to believe, not one promise only, but all the promises of the gospel with joy unspeakable and full of glory—I saw such a fullness in Christ, to save to the uttermost, that, had I ten thousand souls as wretched and guilty as mine was, I could venture all on his blood and righteousness without one doubt, or fear. The comforts I then felt, were beyond expression, and far superior to any thing I had ever known before that memorable hour——.

Eternal glories to the King,
Who brought me safely through ;
My tongue shall never cease to sing,
And endless praise renew.

Not that I suppose I never had true religion before this—I believe I had real religion, or I could not have gone through so many trials—but such a bright manifestation of the redeemer's all-sufficiency and willingness to save, and such a divine confidence to rely on him, I never had till that moment—it was a little heaven upon earth—so sweet, so ravishing, so delightful. I uttered not a word, but silently rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For some time before this period, I be-

gan to exercise my talents for the good of souls. I had acquired a considerable knowledge of Divinity and some gift in *extempore* prayer—and in reading with readiness and propriety, I had much improved. I was thought to read any book well, but especially books of sermons and treatises on religious subjects. I acquired the gift of *extempore* prayers, by officiating as chaplain in Mr. Cannon's family, from the first time family prayer was set up in it, which was shortly after my becoming a member of it the second time.

The way in which I exercised my talents was by appointing meetings, every sunday when the minister was not to preach in the neighbourhood. In these meetings, I used to make prayers, sing Watts' Hymns and Psalms, and read some lively and practical discourse. Considerable congregations used to attend those meetings : solemn attention was paid—impressions were frequently made on the hearers, and I hope some good was done. I never pretended to preach—but only read a printed sermon, with the addition, sometimes of a few words, either to point or explain a sentence. But at the same time I took care to interweave the additional words so naturally with the rest, that the whole might appear to be read in

the book. I had no conception of any man's presuming to preach the gospel, before he had gone through an introductory course of necessary education—nor then, unless he were duly ordained to the ministerial office, by those who have authority to ordain. None thought of preaching without these qualifications and credentials. The *contrary practice* is of a more modern date ; and whether *it* be right or wrong I leave the impartial to determine.

Having continued this exercise for some time, several of my friends wished me to turn my attention toward the ministry, suggesting I had talents suitable for such an office, and that I might be of more service by devoting myself entirely to the preaching of the gospel. But I looked upon the idea as fanciful, and paid little regard to suggestions of that sort. Not that I was averse to the office—but how it was possible I could be qualified, so as to be admitted to it, I had no conception—I was wholly among the *Presbyterians*—had received all my knowledge of religion from them, was peculiarly attached to them and their Church and had no notion then of being a minister or member of any other. I had never examined the principles of the *Church of England*, and by what I knew of the lives and

preaching of the Clergy, I had imbibed strong prejudices against that Church—I know also that the *Presbyterians* required the knowledge of the Latin, Greek, &c. in all, who took part with them in the Ministry. This obstacle appeared insuperable, as I was totally ignorant of *these* languages, and without the means of acquiring the knowledge of them.

I had, by this time, taught school five or six years, and was under such a character as a teacher, that I suppose, I could have got business any where. Having stayed with Mr. Cannon as long as convenient, I went into Cumberland, and set up a school at Mr Thomas Tabb's, a gentleman who had lately joined the Presbyterians. I boarded in his house, performed the office of a chaplain in the family, morning and evening, and still kept up the custom of meeting on sundays, either at my school-house or other private houses. Here I was living when *N. Davies*, a gentleman of Cumberland, solicited, and obtained a young man from the college of *New Jersey*, to come to his house to instruct his son, in the *Latin* &c. this young man's name was *Alexander Martin*, who, after the Revolution was repeatedly elected governor in North Carolina, and is, at this time one of the

members of Congress—I was now more than ever pressed on by my friends, to turn my attention to the ministry; and, for this purpose, they advised me to put myself under the tuition of *Mr. Martin*. I was still without money, perhaps I had not twenty shillings in cash—for, of late, I had laid out what money I could spare, in buying books—and a very good collection of Divinity, Poetry, &c. I had got, the want of money was the only obstacle in the way—but the hand of Providence interposed, and removed it. *Mr. John Cannon*, with whom I had lived, and *Capt. John Hunter*, uncle to *Mr. Martin*, kindly offered me such assistance, as should enable me to go through my studies. This they did unsolicited, and *gratis*—Such a generous proposal I could not reject, and, in a little while, entered *Mr. Martin's* school, as his pupil, being then twenty-five years and four months old—or thereabout.

I had never seen the rudiments of the Latin tongue, in all my life, nor had I learned a word in any grammar whatever. But such was the strength of my memory then, that in eight days, I could so perfectly repeat every part of the grammar, that I began to construe, give the parts of speech, rules, &c. In seven months, I

began to read *Suetonius*, one of the most difficult Latin authors in prose—in a word, I acquired such knowledge of the Latin and Greek, in that year, that my generous friends were released from their burden—as I was capable of improving myself, and teaching others also.

In the following year Mr. *Martin* returned to the *Jersies*, and I took the school upon myself, and continued with Mr. *N. Davis*, as tutor of his son, for a year and a half—I was next employed by Mr. *Thompson Swann*, to teach his children, and some others, for which he agreed to give me forty pounds a year, and my board at his house. I continued with him one year—at this place, I once more to my sorrow, experienced the baneful effects of trifling and ungodly company. Mr. *Swann's* house was a place of great resort. Scarce a week in the year passed without a company for cards, dancing, &c. The same was the case, more or less, with all the wealthy families in the neighbourhood. It was therefore all but impossible for me to avoid being with such company in the situation I was—and sure enough it had a very undue effect on my mind—I thank God, I never gave way then to any overt acts of sin—but I found the company had a very cooling

influence on religion, and greatly abated my zeal, and the fervors of devotion, rendered me vain and trifling in my life and conversation; and, I fear, would have carried me quite away, had I continued longer in that place—you will not wonder to have heard me, from the pulpit, speak so repeatedly and pointedly against such companies and diversions, when you recollect how severely I have suffered by their fatal influence, and therefore spake from personal and sad experience.

It was in the spring, 1762, when I quit my school, and began to prepare for an immediate entrance into Holy Orders. Not in the *Presbyterian*, as first intended, but in the *Church* of England—I first obtained a title to a parish—next waited on the Governor of Virginia, and then on the Rev. Mr. William Robinson, the Bishop of London's Commissary. From both I obtained such papers as were necessary to carry to the Bishop—I had all things ready in May, and agreed for my passage with a William Ashburn, Captain of a Ship, called the *Everton*—but, by one hindrance and another, I did not sail for England till some time in the October following.

When I entered on the languages, I have already said, my intention was to be

a *Presbyterian Minister*—and before I proceed in my narrative, I think it proper to shew why I changed my first intention, and took orders in the *Church of England*.

My first awakening to any sense of religion, was by means of a *Presbyterian*, and all the years, I had lived, since I made a profession, were among the people of that *denomination*—till I went to learning. Indeed, I knew of no other *people*, that had any real appearance of religion; and my sentiments, for want of a more liberal education, were exceedingly contracted. I scarcely thought there was any religion but among the *Presbyterians*—I imbibed all their tenets—and became such a rigid *Calvinist*, that I condemned all men and books, which said any thing against *Election* and *Predestination*. I had contracted a prejudice against the *Church of England*, not only on account of the loose lives of the Clergy, and their cold and unedifying manner of preaching, but also by reading some books, and especially a book, called *the dissenting gentleman's answer to Mr. White's three Letters*. By these and other means, I was much set against the *Prayer Book*, and, indeed, against any public form of prayer. But after I acquired some greater degree of knowledge, both of men and books, my

ideas and sentiments became less and less confined. I began to think more freely, and take a larger view of things. I read the writings of several churchmen, with which I was highly pleased, delighted, and edified. *Hervey* became my favorite author. In *him* I found the same pious breathings, and evangelical doctrines, as I had read in the works of *Presbyterians*; I learned also, that the two most zealous and indefatigable ministers in Europe, *Wesley* and *Whitfield*, were members of the Church of England. Those, and many other things, too tedious to mention, caused me to judge more favourably of the Church than I had done—I saw that a man might be as pious and useful in that Church, as in any other: yea, all things considered at that time, I thought he might be more useful. The *Prayer Book* I had not examined, but had caught up a few scraps and detached sentences out of it, which were said to be objectionable, and which I thought were justly so. But, on mature consideration, and examination of the book on a larger scale, I saw, or thought I saw, that most of the objections were ill founded. There were, indeed, some words in some of the offices, which I thought had been better omitted, or differently exprest—and I think so still. But

upon the whole, I thought it contained an excellent system of doctrine and public worship—equal to any other in the world. I do not know that I thought it better than the Presbyterian, but equally as good. The doctrinal articles I considered the same in substance, in both churches ; and the different modes of worship, I thought not at all essential. The church of England, in Article 17, appeared Calvinistic, but not so pointed as the *Confession of Faith*. And I had begun to doubt a good deal respecting the decrees of *Predestination* and *Election*. These tenets did not appear so reconcilable to the divine attributes, as I might once think. Upon the whole, I thought the church of England no way inferior to the *Presbyterian*. My mind hung in a state of *equilibrium* between the two, respecting their theory. I then considered the advantages and disadvantages which might arise from my choice of *this* side or *that*. On the side of the church of England, I saw several disadvantages, for the present, I saw it would be attended with great expence in making a voyage to England—that I should be exposed to much peril and danger from the sea, and from the enemy ; (it being in time of war :)—all which expence, peril and danger might be avoided,

by taking orders among the Presbyterians. But this present and temporal inconvenience, was ballanced by the prospect of a more permanent support hereafter, in case of success. I saw the Presbyterian Minister dependant on annual subscriptions—a mode of support very precarious in itself, and which subjects the Minister to the caprice of so many people, and tends to bind his hands and hinder his usefulness. For these reasons, since the revolution, I never would accept of an annual subscription—I chose rather to have nothing, than to be continually exposed to the whims of the multitude.

To all this I add, that the general prejudice of the people, at that time, against dissenters, and in favour of the church, gave me a full persuasion, that I could do more good in the church than any where else. This gave a very decided preference in favour of taking orders in the Church. I therefore sold my patrimony* (about 300 acres of Land)—put my life in my hand, and embarked for *Great-Britain*, (as I said) in the month of October 1762.

In the ship, in which I sailed, were three passengers, besides myself: one of whom,

* This patrimony had but lately fallen to him, by the death of his brother.

was *Richard Collinson*, a pious young man, who was going also for orders. The other two were a gentleman and his lady, by the name of Lewis. All three were born in England, and I was the only American on board. We had a short and agreeable passage enough, till we got to the coast of *Ireland*. The first land we made, as well as I remember, was *Fair Foreland*, a place rendered famous in history, by the massacre of one hundred thousand Protestants, in the reign of King Charles the first. The sight of that place, with the recollection of that massacre, made such a deep and awful impression on my heart, as is not easily described.

It being a time of war, as we drew near the coast, we were in the more danger of being assailed by privateers and other armed vessels of the enemy, (the French)—’Twas early in the morning, when we got within land, and we kept sight of Ireland, till we came near the bay of *Carrickfergus*. We now spied a vessel lying to windward, and, by her appearance, she was judged, by the captain, and old seamen, to be an enemy. Our ship was armed for defence with fourteen carriage guns, swivels, muskets, and other weapons for close quarters. All hands were called to arms, and to be

in readiness for a salute. I was placed at a nine pounder in the cabin, at which also, Mr. Collinson was directed to assist. But it was easy to discover, that no assistance was to be expected from him. He looked pale as a ghost, trembled, and declared he could not fight even to save his own life. In good truth, I wished the thief-looking vessel much farther off—however, I kept a good countenance, and, to do honor to America, declared that a Virginian had steel to the back, and would never flinch. After a while, the suspected vessel sheered off, and, I saved my credit, and blood both.

We went on quietly after this alarm, till we got within, perhaps, less than a days sail of Liverpool, the place to which the ship was bound. We had but a light breeze all day—but about midnight the wind rose, and blew a storm. This was the more dangerous, as we were now so far within land. I was asleep in my cot, when the captain and first mate came into the cabin, about one o'clock at night. Their coming awaked me. They lighted up the candle, and, with much apparent anxiety, examined their books of charts and soundings.—The ship was laid to, as well as could be done, till the morning ;

and I went to sleep again very quietly. In the morning, by the break of day, the captain stepped into the cabin, with his usual alacrity, and pleasantly told us, we had a pilot aboard. The wind still blew with unabated rage. It was agreed by all, that it was impossible to make Liverpool with that wind. The best that could be done for the safety of the ship, was, to steer for the town of *Beaumaris*, and come to an anchor in that harbor. This lies on an arm of the sea, in the isle of Anglesea, in North Wales, over against the high mountain of *Penmanmaur*, and still farther from Liverpool, than the great Orms head, off which we were sailing, when the storm began. The ship was got under weigh. But within sight of the town we had an island to pass, and it was with the utmost difficulty we escaped being dashed to pieces upon it. When we approached the island, the captain seemed almost distracted with fear, lest the ship could not be prevented from running foul of it—the wind and tide setting directly upon it. He stamp'd as hard and as fast as he could, on the deck, crying out to the man at the helm, “Luff, luff, Thomas, luff.” The man thought it impossible for the vessel to be brought any closer to the wind, the sheets already shak-

ing,—the captain, therefore, drove him from the helm, and took the business upon himself. We just escaped that rocky island, and that was all. However, the ship ran so near it, that her keel struck three times against the rocks under water, and with such violence, that some men at the town, which is about three miles off, plainly perceived the shocks, and expected, from the bending of the masts, that they all would go overboard. But to the kind hand of Heaven I ascribe it, that we all escaped the stormy wind and dangerous sea.

Having got clear of the island, the pilot, either through ignorance, or not having recovered his right mind from the late alarm, ran the ship out of the channel, and set her fast on a sand bank, when the tide had just began to ebb. This was about nine or ten o'clock in the morning.—The captain knew that nothing could be done towards heaving her off, till the flood made again, which would not be in less than six hours,—he ordered the yawl to be let down, in which he and all the passengers went on shore and into the town, to regale ourselves on some fresh provisions. As I had eat nothing, for several days, but salt beef, ranced butter, black biscuit, &c. while on

board, the meat, butter, and every thing I ate, at *Beaumaris*, exceeded any thing I ever had tasted in all my life. Having refreshed ourselves, in the most delicious and agreeable manner, we took a view of the town, and the remains of an old *castle* standing just without the town, which had been erected as a place of security and defence, by one of the first kings of England. Every thing appeared so delightful, and the inhabitants looked so fresh and ruddy, that I thought no people in the world could live better than the *Welsh*. The high mountain of *Penmanmaur*, lying over against the town, with the top in the clouds, and all the visible parts covered with snow, exhibited the most grand and majestic appearance, I had ever seen. I was so glad to set my foot on land, that I was loth to return again to the ship: but, on enquiry, I found I could not conveniently travel from that place to London, by land;—we laded ourselves with some of the good things the land afforded, and, in the afternoon returned to the vessel. Soon after the flood came in, and, at the highest water, every effort, then thought of, was used to bring the ship into the channel, but to no effect. In the mean while, either as the tide was coming in or going out,

the ship was in great danger of being beaten to pieces. She was, almost every minute, lifted up, to a considerable height by the swelling tide—and as often, by the subsiding thereof, was dashed against the ground, with such violence, that the captain, I dare say, expected little else, than the loss of the ship and cargo. We had five hundred and thirteen hogsheads of tobacco on board.

On the Wednesday night the storm, I have mentioned, first arose. On the Thursday morning, we ran aground, and on the evening of the same day, the first effort was made to get the vessel off, but failed. On the Friday morning, the flood came again to its greatest height. As little as I knew of sailing affairs, I thought I could see there was no probability of working the vessel round, in the ordinary way, because she had been run aground in a place too narrow for that purpose. I proposed to the captain the method of *caging* the ship, (a term I had learned while on board) when the tide made again. He fell in with the proposal, and, on the Friday morning, all things were made ready to cage the ship. Long ropes were made fast to the ship's head, and the other end of the

ropes were made fast to the sterns of the yawl and long boat, and these supplied with able seamen, ready to labor at the oars, as soon as the word was given. This is the method of caging a ship. The word was given—the men labored with might and main—the ship began to move, and in about five minutes time, we rode safe in the channel. The shouts of the seamen, on this joyful occasion, seemed to rend the skies. It was now about nine in the morning, and quite calm, not a breath of wind from any quarter ; so we were obliged to lay at anchor, all that day. At sunset, a light breeze sprung up, and we got under weigh in the twilight. The captain had dismissed the first pilot, and we had got another, who was judged more skilful.—We had to pass the same island, we so narrowly escaped the day before. It was dark by the time we got long side of it, by which time the new pilot had rendered himself incapable of his duty, by making too free with the bottle. The captain, on discovering this, spoke to him on the occasion. Upon which a desperate quarrel ensued, accompanied with such horrid language, that the pilot, in his rage and fury, gave up the charge of the ship, protesting with the most shocking imprecations, that,

if she sunk to hell, he would not lift a hand, or say a word to prevent it. The captain and sailors were strangers to the place—only they knew we were among rocks and shoals—so that they seemed *at their wits end*. The captain came and sat down in the cabin, where the passengers were, for he knew not what to do—and by the violent agitations of his body, discovered the still greater agitations of his mind ;—he wept, and seemed to give up all for lost. The sailors, on deck, still endeavored to steer the vessel as well as they could, but knew not which way was best and safest to lay her. But at this instant the rudder bands gave way—the ship turned round, in the place, and drove at random. Such noise, uproar and confusion now took place, that one of the passengers fainted, and all of every description seemed perfectly thunderstruck.—As to myself, I can say with truth, that, as far as I can now recollect, I was as composed, and unappalled, as I am at this moment—nor had I been otherwise from the time the storm arose, on the Wednesday night. Whether my serenity of mind arose from ignorance of the danger we were in, or, from a greater degree of natural fortitude, or a firm reliance on divine protection, I shall not

attempt to decide:—but so it was, and, perhaps, this was a means, under God, of rescuing all from danger.—As soon as the rudder bands were made fast, and the ship was subject to the helm, I calmly went upon deck, in quest of the pilot. I found him sitting alone, and, like *Achilles*, indulging himself in wrath and rage.—I mildly address him, and begged him to take charge of the ship. He refused, and urged that he had been maltreated by the captain, and could not submit to the insult. I admitted the captain might, in his warmth, have uttered words improper—but he ought not, on that account, to suffer his resentment to transport him so far, as to endanger the ship and cargo, and, perhaps, the lives of the passengers and others, who had given him no offence. I might add, that his own interest was at stake, and that the welfare and support of himself and family, in future, might much depend on the transactions of that one night. In a while he became more calm, and, being a little sobered, gave me his word he would take charge of the ship again, and doubted not to bring all safe into port. He did so, and in a little time brought us into an open sea, where we rode out the rest of the night, without any obstruction. On Saturday

morning the wind blew hard again, and so directly in our teeth, that it was impossible to make Liverpool that day. However, by often putting about, and lying near the wind as possible we arrived about sun-set at a village, or small town, on the coast, about eight miles below Liverpool. Having cast anchor here, the captain and passengers went on shore, and we refreshed ourselves, at an inn. Mr. *Collinson* and myself stayed at the inn all night, and returned no more to the *Everton*. The next morning (Sunday) we hired horses and a guide, and reached Liverpool, just as the bells were ringing for church. We were very anxious to attend divine service, and hear a sermon, at some of the churches, that morning—and, regardless of dress, we entered the first church we came to. It was an elegant building, large and roomy, and crowded with hearers. The minister, that preached, made a noble appearance, being full drest in all his canonicals :—but his sermon was as empty as his dress was full. It was merely historical ; and nearly of the same cast were all the sermons I heard in that town.

I took lodgings that night in Liverpool, and, early on the Monday morning, I had

the pleasure of a visit from a countryman of mine, Mr. John Tabb, of Amelia county, Virginia. At that time he lived in Liverpool, being in partnership with Messrs. *Rumbold* and *Walker*, merchants in that town. Mr. Tabb had heard I had come to town, and came to the inn on purpose to befriend me—and the many great civilities and essential kindnesses he shewed me, there, and during my stay in England, impressed on my mind such sentiments of gratitude to him, as no length of time can ever eradicate. I found him a friend indeed.—To mention all his civilities and essential services, might be tedious in this place—but they are all engraven on the tables of my heart, nor can I think of him, at any time, without a sensible glow of gratitude.

I was also courteously received by Mr. Charles Gore, the alderman of the town, in whose ship we had sailed to England. He invited me and the other passengers to dine with him, and treated us all in a princely manner. And, after staying two or three days in Liverpool, I set out, in the stage coach, for *London*, accompanied by the rest of the passengers, and reached that *Metropolis* on the Saturday night following.

I waited on the bishop of London, as soon as I could, and put all my papers in his hand. He read them, and told me my credentials were very authentic, and referred me to his chaplain, Dr. *Jortin*, for examination—but told me there would be no ordination till Christmas. I said, my wish was to be dispatched sooner, as I never had the small pox, I was in great danger every day I staid in the city. His reply was, he could not have ordinations every day.—I knew I must wait his leisure, and so took my leave of his lordship, for that time. I then waited on Dr. *Jortin*, and past my trials before him with approbation, and he promised to present me to the bishop. He did so, and I was ordained deacon, in the King's chapel, at Christmas, in the year 1762, after I had staid in London about four weeks. There were several others ordained at the same time, all Englishmen, except myself. Some of these had studied at *Oxford*, and some at Cambridge. We all, by appointment, waited on the bishop, in the afternoon of the same day, on which we had been ordained. We were received very politely, and, I remember, he address himself to us in words to this effect—that he had never been so well pleased with any ordination before, as he

then was—"Your performances, at your examination, which I have now in hand, *said he*, are all well done;" and, fixing his eyes on me, added, "especially yours from Virginia." You may be sure it was very gratifying to me, to find myself, who had never seen the inside of a college, or any other public seminary, one hour in my life, thus distinguished, and placed before *Oxonians* and *Cantabrigians*.

The bishop of *Chester* was to hold an ordination, in the city, the Sunday following, and I requested and obtained from my lord of London, letters dismissory to him. And, having passed my trials before his chaplain, I was ordained priest, by the bishop of *Chester*, just one week after I had been ordained a deacon.

By the 10th of January, 1763, I had all my letters of ordination, &c. ready for returning back to Virginia, but was detained in London, for more than three months after this. At first, a hard frost blocked up the river *Thames*, that no ship could sail out for many weeks. This detention, however contrary to my wish, gave me an opportunity of preaching several sermons in the churches of that great city, and of bearing my testimony to the truth, before several thousands. Perhaps, I might not, then

and there, preach the truth, in such clear, and pointed terms, as I ought—yet, as I found out, I preached in a manner, so different from what was customary with the clergy, that it was strongly suspected I was a *Methodist*, or something else besides a churchman. Though, at that time, I had never seen, or conversed with a Methodist in all my life, nor did I know what the principles of the Methodists were. True, while I staid in London, I heard both Mr. *Wesley* and Mr. *Whitfield*, and also one of the lay-preachers of the latter. But I got little edification from either of the three, though the two first spoke well, and to the purpose.

Before the frost broke off, another circumstance took place, which still detained me. It was, I think, towards the last of February, when I was hoping to sail soon to my native country, I took the small pox—a disorder which, at that time, was extremely formidable to Virginians. But here again, I can truly say, that, when it was pronounced, that I had the small pox, I felt no alarm at all. I took it in the natural way, and yet had it pretty favorably. I was so well in eight or nine days, that I was tempted to resume my favourite employment of reading. But my eyes were

still too weak for such business, and were so affected by it, that I was struck with such a violent pain, in one of them, especially, that I never endured such misery before. This brought on a high degree of fever, which, notwithstanding the frequent attendance of an eminent physician and apothecary, could not be removed for five or six weeks. Here I had an opportunity of seeing and knowing the very different respect shewn, by the faculty, to clergymen, in England, from what is shewn in Virginia. Dr. Thomas Reeves, eminent in his profession, waited on me several times, during the fever, and prescribed—but, understanding I was a clergyman, would receive no fee or reward. The apothecary also, Mr. John Walton, who attended me two or three times a week, and often once or twice every day, for six or seven weeks, would receive nothing for his trouble. So that the expence of every thing, during the small pox, and the fever that followed, in that strange land, was very trifling and inconsiderable. Whereas had I gone through the same in Petersburg, Richmond, or any other town in Virginia, I must have paid, I suppose, fifty or sixty pounds, at least.

The day before that, on which the pustules of the small pox appeared, I had walked to the *Exchequer*, and received 20*l.* which was Queen *Anne's* bounty, allowed to every clergyman ordained for, and coming to Virginia. I suppose also, that I had something considerable remaining of 50*l.* which I had brought with me, when I first came to London—as I had been very frugal. All this money I had deposited in the hands of my landlord, Mr. *Lewis*, who had come passenger with me from Virginia. When I recovered from my long illness, and began to traverse the streets again, I enquired for my money, having a present need for some of it, at least. He gave me eighteen pence, which, as he said, he supposed would serve me for that day. I took the money without suspecting any thing. But when I asked again for some more of my money, the disagreeable secret began to unfold. I soon found I had no money left—no, not a single farthing. Mrs. *Lewis* told me, that her husband had, through necessity, made use of all the money to supply the wants of his family—but hoped I did not doubt his honor so far, as to think I should not be repaid. In the first part of the story, she was right enough, but was much mistaken in the last,

for when I applied to Mr. Lewis for payment, he broke out in a violent rage—pretending I was in his debt, and produced a long account, which he had trumped up, of articles I knew nothing about. But this I knew, that he had basely taken all my cash, was many pounds in my debt, and that I should never get a sixpence out of him. I saw it needless to contend, and was glad to get out of his house, with what few articles I had.

To be pennyless in the City of London, 3000 miles from home, was not very eligible—but I did not despair. I visited a friend, Mr *Abel Peyton*, at whose house I had often been before at his own invitation. When at dinner with him and his Lady, I told them my situation, and the treatment of Lewis. Mrs. Peyton took up a glass of wine, drank to me, and said, with an air of great frankness, *dont be cast down, Mr. Farratt, you shall not want money.* Words of consolation indeed, I felt them, and shall never forget them, nor her that spoke them, though I thank God, I had no occasion to make use of her bounty.

Previous to this visit to Mr. *Peyton*, I had written to my good friend, Mr. Tabb, in Liverpool, informing him of my situation, and the loss of my money. This

letter, wrote by the post, which, without loss of time, he answered, in words to this effect, "That he had been under concern, in not hearing from me, since I had been in London—that he had been afraid I had taken the small pox, and had died of the disorder, but was glad to hear of me, and that I was yet alive—and to remove all uneasiness from my mind, on the account of cash, he desired I would wait on his correspondent in London, to whom he had written to furnish me with as much money as I should think proper to call on him for, and wished me to come to Liverpool, as soon as I could, and I should have a passage free, in one of his ships, which would sail to Virginia in a few days."—How kind and humane was all this!—What unusual confidence did he place in my honor, in limiting me to no particular sum, but left it to my option to take just what money I thought fit! Can such a friend ever be forgotten?

This letter I found at my lodgings, in the evening, on my return from Mr. Peyton's. I immediately applied for the money, and to evince that the confidence of my friend had not been ill placed, I took only ten pounds. The next day I took the

stage, and after a fatiguing and disagreeable journey, I arrived in safety at Liverpool. Here I had the pleasure of seeing my friend and benefactor once more, and receiving renewed favors at his hands. By an oversight of the coachman, my trunk, which contained my best cloaths, the bishop's licence, &c. &c. was left at the inn, in London, where we took the stage. So that when I came to Liverpool, I had none but the old cloaths I had brought with me from Virginia. As soon as Mr. Tabb knew this, he furnished me with a new suit of the best black broad cloth, and paid a taylor for the making. He also took care to provide bedding and every necessary to render my passage home, as agreeable as possible.

On the last of April, I took my leave of my friend, and went on board of one of his ships, called the Planter, commanded by captain Middleton. We had a long passage, and were at short allowance for water, almost the whole way. But, by the blessing of God, I had the pleasure of treading on my native soil the first sunday in July, 1763; and after an absence of about nine months. For all the favors I met with; during this period, and for all the dangers I escaped let the name of the

Lord have all the thanks, praise and adoration, which are so justly due.

I landed in York-Town, early on the Sunday morning, and taking breakfast at an inn, I went up York river, in a boat, in order to wait on the commissary. I waited also on the governor of Virginia. Then, having seen my friends in New-Kent, I went in quest of a parish.

Few parishes were, at that time, vacant in Virginia. I knew of but *one*, and to that I had no great mind. In August, I set out for Cumberland, where I had lived the year before. Here I staid eight or nine days, and preached three or four sermons, in the parish of my old friend, the Rev. Mr. *McLaurine*. By him I was told, that the parish of *Bath*, where I now live, was vacant. On this information, I left Cumberland, August 17th, and came to the house of Mr. Leonard Claiborne, jun. on the 19th, in the afternoon. Mr. Claiborne was one of the vestry. I had not the smallest acquaintance with him, nor indeed with a single person in the parish, nor had I brought any letters of recommendation, or even one letter of introduction, except four or five lines from Mr. *Swann*, which were written to introduce me to Mr. Claiborne only.

I met with a civil reception from Mr. Claiborne and his family, and we were presently as free and sociable, as if we had been acquainted all our lives. At my desire, notice was sent out for my preaching at Butterwood church, the Sunday following. This was on Friday evening, and on the Sunday, I had the church full, though time for notice was so short. My performances, both in the desk and pulpit, met the hearty approbation of my hearers. Three or four of the vestry were then present. The Thursday following was a day of thanksgiving, appointed by authority, for peace between France and England. I appointed to preach at Sappony church on that day—and at Hatcher's run, the Sunday following. I attended those appointments, had large congregations, and still met the approbation of the vestry and people. In the course of that week, at my request, the vestry agreed to meet, on the Monday following. They met accordingly, at the Old Glebe. There were ten or eleven members present. The business of the day was shortly dispatched. All that was said was nearly this. Mr. Claiborne said, "Gentlemen, our business here is to determine, whether Mr. Jarratt shall be received as minister of this parish." The

unanimous voice was, "I have no objection, nor did I ever hear any in the parish say they had any objection." The clerk was immediately ordered to enter it on record, that I was received as minister of Bath parish, on the 29th of August, 1763. This was just ten days from my first coming into the county of Dinwiddie, and commencing any acquaintance in the place.

I was now introduced into a new station in life, which called for new exertions, and I applied myself to the several duties of my office, according to the best of my judgment—But the manner, in which I conducted myself—the means I used for the salvation of souls, and the success of my labours, will be the subject of another letter—And indeed, it would appear impious, in me, if I did not stop, a while, in this place, to pour out my soul, in ardent gratitude and praise, to that indulgent *Being*, who endowed me with such faculties of body and mind, as I have possessed, and still possess—who, at all times, hath given me food to eat and raiment to put on, suited to the various stations and conditions of my life—raised me from the depths of obscurity and the lowest walks of life, to some degree of eminence and usefulness among men—provided friends

for me, both at home and abroad—by sea and land, and on both sides the *Atlantic*. But above all, am I bound to bless and magnify his goodness and mercy, in bringing me out of a state of darkness, guilt and bondage to sin and satan, to a state of light and knowledge, and set me at liberty from the worst of tyrants, through Jesus Christ—and giving me a good hope, through grace, that, when I have served him, in this generation, according to his will, I shall rest from my labors, in the peaceful regions of everlasting felicity, when time shall be no more.

That this may be the happy lot of you and me, is the prayer of your sincere friend,

DEVEREUX JARRATT.

LETTER II.

Bath, December 1, 1794.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I WAS in my 31st year, when I took upon me the pastoral charge of some thousands of souls, in the county of Dinwiddie, and parish of Bath. An awful charge! *Who is sufficient for these things?*

Several ministers had been my predecessors, in the parish; and though there had been no settled pastor, for about nine months, prior to my induction, yet the churches had been constantly supplied by two of the neighboring clergy. But, notwithstanding all this, I found the principles of the gospel—the nature and condition of man—the plan of salvation through Christ—and the nature and necessity of spiritual regeneration, as little known and thought of, as if the people had never a church or heard a sermon in their lives. Yet, as it appeared, they thought themselves a wise

and understanding people, and as religious, as was necessary, or their Maker required them to be. Such being the state of things, every well informed mind will readily conceive, in a measure, the difficulties I had to encounter. I had to encounter gross ignorance of divine things, combined with conceited wisdom and moral rectitude. I had also to engage with strong prejudices, occasioned by their high opinion of the great learning and accomplishments of their former *ministers*. From *these*, I suppose, they had heard little else but morality, and smooth harrangues, in no wise calculated to disturb their carnal repose, or awaken any one to a sense of guilt and danger.—They could not, therefore, bear a blow at the root, or the self-abasing doctrines of free grace, which I constantly endeavored to preach in a close, plain, searching, pungent, animated manner. Nature would rise, and violently reluctate against such preaching—it was too mortifying for human pride to bear. So that how highly soever they had approved of me before, they as heartily wished, in a little time, I dare say, they had never seen me; or else, that I would prophecy smoother things. My doctrine was strange and wonderful to them; and their language, one to another,

was to this effect : “ We have had many ministers, and have heard many, before this man, but we never heard any thing, till now, of conversion, the new birth, &c.—we never heard that men are so totally lost and helpless, that they could not save themselves, by their own power and good deeds ;—if our good works will not save us, what will ? We never heard any of our ministers say any thing against *civil mirth*, such as dancing, &c. nay, they rather encouraged the people in them ; for we have seen parson such a one, and parson such another, at these mirthful places, as merry as any of the company. This new man of ours brings strange things to our ears.”—Such conversation was not unfrequent, as I afterwards learned from such as had heard it, and, no doubt, joined in it ; but they told me nothing of it, till they were themselves convinced of the truths I preached, and had begun to seek the salvation of their souls through Jesus Christ.

This language was chiefly among the upper and middle classes, and I have found, to my grief, that the fortification, erected from materials taken from the examples and preaching of their former ministers, was one of the strongest holds I had to demo-

lish. When I have urged the necessity of observing *this*, or abstaining from *that*, I was often confronted with a, *Why did not other ministers tell us so and so? Were they not as learned as you?*—Under this covert, many lay secure, and to this day, they screen themselves behind it.

At that time I stood alone, not knowing of one clergyman, in Virginia, like minded with myself; yea, I was opposed, and reproached, by the clergy—called an enthusiast, fanatic, visionary, dissenter, Presbyterian, madman, and what not;—yet was I so well convinced of the utility and importance of the truths I declared and the doctrines I preached, that no clamor, opposition, or reproach, could daunt my spirit, or move me from my purpose and manner of preaching, or induce me to give flattering titles to any man. I durst not prophecy smooth things, nor flatter the highest in their follies and vanities. But for the sake of order and method, and to render this narrative as succinct as possible, I will divide this letter into three particulars, and shall speak,

First—of my general plan of preaching.

Secondly—of the frequency and extent

of my preaching, and of some of the effects of my labors—and,

Thirdly—of some incidental circumstances, which may be worthy of record.

As you lived near me for a number of years, after you had arrived to years of some maturity, you will be able to recollect, with me, several things I may mention, especially under the second and third particulars.

First—I am to speak of my general plan of preaching.

I had been taught by experience, as well as by reading *the word*, to consider the whole plan of redemption, through a mediator, as founded on the lapsed state of mankind, and their utter inability to restore themselves to the favor and image of God, which were lost by the *fall*, by any thing they could either do or suffer. I knew also, that they who are whole see no need of a physician, but those that are sick, and consequently that a sense of danger and misery was requisite to excite speedy and vigorous efforts for help and deliverance—I therefore judged it necessary to adopt that method of preaching, which might have the most direct tendency to make sinners feel their situation, and be sensible of their guilt, danger and help-

lessness. Nothing short of this will properly turn the attention of the human race to the invitations of the gospel, and render a saviour precious to their souls. To effect this, I began my ministry with the doctrine of original sin. I have no notion of entertaining unawakened mortals with florid harrangues and fine paintings of moral *virtue*, as is too commonly the case, in our day. The word *virtue*, or *moral virtue*, is the cant term of all our velvet-mouthed preachers. Modern sermons, both from the pulpit and the press, are generally full of it. It is, indeed, a very pretty word, and sounds soft and smooth. It means *something*, or *nothing*, according to the fancy of the reader or hearer. But I consider this favorite word to be of heathenish extraction, and therefore cautiously avoid it in all my public discourses. I dare say, you will seldom find it in any of my printed works. Though I see it has crept into the 12th sermon, vol. 2, page 64. You will there read, *piety and virtue*: but, I think, in the manuscript, I wrote, *piety and mercy*. The word may be found in a few other places, but not with my design. I find I am digressing again, and must check myself.

Instead of moral harrangues, and advising my hearers, in a cool, dispassionate manner, to walk in the *primrose paths of a decided, sublime and elevated virtue*, and not to tread in the foul tracts of *disgraceful vice*, I endeavored to expose, in the most alarming colors, the guilt of sin, the entire depravity of human nature—the awful danger, mankind are in, by nature and practice—the tremendous curse to which they are obnoxious—and their utter inability to evade the sentence of the law and the strokes of divine justice, by their own power, merit or good works. These doctrines are very grating and mortifying to the pride of man, and therefore, the more necessary to be often repeated, and warmly inculcated, that the haughtiness of man may be brought down, and his lofty imaginations laid low; that Jesus Christ may be gladly received, as a Saviour in a desperate case.

In a word, my plan was, first, To convince of sin. Second, of inability. Third, To point out the remedy and press the convicted to fly to Jesus Christ, and rest on him for complete salvation. And, fourth, To exhort those who believed, to be careful to maintain good works, and go on to

perfection. Or, in the words of St. Paul, *to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* But I need not be more explicit here, as my *sermon* preached before the convention of the church, in the year 1792, holds forth my plan, pretty fully—and to *this* I refer you, for more particular information on this head. That sermon stands foremost in the first volume of my printed discourses. And in the *sermons*, as they follow one after another, in that volume, you have an exemplification of the plan laid down, in the *first*. I pass on,

Secondly, To speak of the extent, frequency and effects of my preaching and labors.

The genuine doctrines of the gospel, when preached in due order, and inculcated with any just degree of animation and *pathos*, seldom fail in producing good effects, more or less. I had the exquisite pleasure of seeing this realized, among the people of my charge, before I had labored very long. A religious concern took place, and that important question, *what shall I do to be saved?* was more and more common. This anxiety was first manifested, not among the lowest, but rather the middle ranks of the people. Not that I

suppose none of the poorer sort were convinced of sin, and truly concerned for their souls, but they did not make me acquainted with it, because, at that time, people, in the lower walks of life, had not been accustomed to converse with clergymen, whom they supposed to stand in the rank of gentlemen, and above the company and conversation of *plebeians*. This I know had been my case formerly, and probably was the case of the poorer sort, in Bath, at that day, and might prevent them from speaking to me, while others were more forward to open their minds.

As soon as I discovered a religious concern in the parish, I no longer confined my labors to the churches and pulpits, on Sundays, but went out by night and by day, at any time in the week, to private houses, and convened as many as I could, for the purpose of prayer, singing, preaching and conversation. This was a great novelty in a minister of the church; but it was beneficial in its consequences. I think more solid and lasting good was done by those means, than at the churches. For though the first solemn impressions and heartfelt convictions were generally made by the sermons preached at the churches—yet, in the more private meetings, those impressions

were deepened, and more durably fixed. At the same time, the people had an opportunity of having their judgments more informed, than by hearing a public sermon, as every one was at liberty to ask any religious question, and propose any doubts, they chose. The poorer sort, who at first might be shy in speaking, soon wore off their shyness, and spoke as freely as others. On those occasions, I used to put questions also to the people, in order to fix their attention to any subject of importance, and, at the same time, to make them the more sensible of their need of instruction.— These ends were in a good measure answered by the means. I found every class, as might be expected, extremely ignorant of divine things, and especially of the nature, design and terms of the gospel. The purport of some of the questions, I was wont to ask, and the substance of the answers made, I shall here write down, which may serve as a specimen of the little knowledge mankind have of religious matters, or are like to have, where nothing but morality is preached—or where no proper means are used to bring them to the knowledge of themselves and evangelical truths. The questions were such as follow :—

Question. What is the difference between the law and gospel?

Answer. I know not of any difference—or, I know not one from the other.

Question. What is the covenant of grace, and what are the terms of it?

Answer. I know not—I never heard of a covenant of grace, or of any other covenant whatever.

Question. What is conversion?

Answer. I know not—I never heard such a word in all my life, till I heard it from you.

Question. What is regeneration—or the new-birth?

Answer. I never heard of either—the words are new to me.

Question. Is a man to be justified by his own works?

Answer. To be sure—or I know not what is to justify him.

A number of other questions respecting repentance, faith, sanctification, &c. &c. were occasionally asked—but the answers were generally as lame and unsatisfactory. But I shall not enlarge.

This method, as it tended to convince the people of their want of religious instruction, pointed out to me, at the same

time, their necessities, and enabled me the better to judge, in what manner I ought to address them, from the pulpit, so as to suit their capacities, circumstances, wants, &c. Ministers, who are not accustomed to converse frequently and familiarly with their flocks, can have but little conception of the small degree of christian knowledge, which is to be found among them—or how little they know of themselves—of God—of *Christ*, and the way of salvation through *him*—or, indeed, of any thing they ought to know.

The religious concern, among the people of Bath, soon enlarged the bounds of my labors. Such a work could not be confined to a corner. The sound of it quickly reached to the neighboring parishes, and from thence to counties and parishes at a greater distance. This moved many scores, from other parishes, to come and see and hear for themselves. My churches were now crowded, from time to time, with a concourse of *strangers*, both far and near. Several of *these* also felt the power of divine truth—were convicted of their guilt and danger—and, in a while, profest to be happy in God. By these things, more and more were excited to attend the churches, and convictions and

conversions increased and spread into counties still more remote.

Butterwood church, where you were wont to attend, had generally the most crowded audience, and soon became too small to hold one half the congregation. One large wing, and then another, were added to it—but yet room was wanting. It gives me pleasure now to review those happy times, and the many precious and reviving seasons, when the spirit was poured out from on high, and such a number of souls was gathered into the fold of the *Great Shepherd*. Several such seasons took place, between the years 1764 and 1772. Something of this, at least towards the latter part, you can remember, and, I trust, will ever remember with joy, on your own account, as well as of others. In the course of these years, a great many souls were, in a judgment of charity, savingly converted to God, and obtained remission of sins, by faith in Jesus Christ.

As the subjects of this blessed change of heart and state were by no means confined to the county of Dinwiddie, those, who, from other counties, had tasted the goodness of God, were anxious that others also might be possest of the same grace, especially such as were nearly allied to them.

They therefore wished them all to hear those truths preached, which had proved so beneficial to themselves. But as some would not ride so far, and others had not the conveniency, I was frequently and earnestly solicited, by one and another, from different quarters, to come over and help them, and give all their friends, &c. an opportunity of hearing. Thus commenced the enlargement of my bounds of preaching, which, in process of time, extended to a circle of five or six hundred miles—*east, west, north and south.*

The clergy, in general, were opposed to me, and unwilling to open their church doors for me, and some absolutely refused me their pulpits—and, moreover, because few churches were large enough to contain the congregation which would attend—or, because, many times, it was more convenient to appoint the meeting, at a place where no church was—this combination of circumstances gave rise to my preaching in the open air, under *trees, arbors or booths.* On such occasions, my congregations have frequently been so numerous, that the extremities of the audience stood at the distance of fifty, sixty or eighty yards from me, on the right and left, and in front.—But kind Providence had favored me with

such strength of constitution and soundness of lungs, that, without any disagreeable strain of voice, the farthest off could hear, as well as the nearest.

The boundaries of my labors had been enlarging from the year 1765; but from the year 1776 to 1783, my circuit of preaching was considerably increased—but yet I could not comply with the many solicitations I had from different quarters still more remote. However, I complied so far, as to preach in many counties, both in North-Carolina and Virginia. In Carolina, I visited the counties of Northampton, Halifax, Warren, Franklin and Granville. In Virginia, the counties of Brunswick, Greenville and Southampton, on the south; Lunenburg, Mecklenburgh, Charlotte, Bedford, Prince Edward, Nottoway and Amelia, on the west; Cumberland, Powhatan, Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, Caroline, King and Queen, and King William, on the north; and New Kent, James City, Charles City, Surrey and Sussex on the east.

During these years of traveling, in the places just mentioned, I regularly attended the three churches in my own parish—hardly ever failing to be at one or another, in rotation, every Sunday; except,

perhaps, three or four sabbaths in the year, when the distance I had gone from home was too great, and the appointments made for preaching were too many to admit of my return in the course of one week. But for these few Sundays, I think I made ample satisfaction to my own parish, by preaching sometimes twice or thrice on the Lord's day, and frequently on week days, in various quarters of it. For several years I kept a *journal* of my labors and travels; and from *this* it appears, that I preached five sermons, one week with another throughout the year; or about two hundred and seventy sermons and lectures, one hundred and fifty of which were delivered in Bath. By the blessing of God, my efforts were crowned with some considerable success, and the Lord gave me many souls to my ministry, both at home and abroad. But on this point I must be sparing, as you know I was never forward in speaking of the success of my own labors, lest it should have the appearance of boasting and self-importance. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, but *God giveth the increase*.

It has been intimated already, that, at my first settlement in this parish, I knew of no minister of the then established church, who was like minded with myself, respect-

ing the doctrines I preached and the manner of preaching them. I stood alone for some considerable time ; and I dare say no man was ever more cordially abhorred, than I was by the clergy in general. By *them*, was I frequently threatened with writs and prosecutions, &c. for the breach of canonical order. But here my wonted fortitude stood my friend, so that I flinched not in the least. One of the most furious wrote me two angry and threatening letters, reminding me of irregularity, and breach of the 71st canon, by preaching in private houses, &c. To his first letter I replied, in mild and inoffensive terms. He wrote again, and insisted very strenuously on my great irregularities in breaking the canon above said. I also wrote again, and observed—That if to preach in a private house, or on any unconsecrated ground, was a breach of canonical order and regularity, then were we all involved in the same condemnation, for I knew not that any clergyman in Virginia, ever scrupled to transgress that canon, for the sake of forty shillings. This was the legal fee for a funeral sermon, under the establishment, and for the sake of which, all places were alike sacred, when any clergyman was called upon for such a service. I therefore

asked my incensed brother, whether I, who preached in such places, without fee or reward, could be more culpable than those who were paid for it? I could not see that I was, and therefore concluded by saying, *He that is without sin*, in this respect, *let him cast the first stone* at me. Moreover, as I knew my testy brother to be very fond of cards, dice, tables, &c. which are expressly forbidden us, by the 75th canon, I made free to ask, if it was not as criminal, and more so, to break the 75th as the 71st canon? From that time I heard no more of the canons.

But in a few years after my induction, I became acquainted with a neighboring clergyman*, in whom some good thing was found. He had great gifts for the pulpit, and spoke with a degree of animation, very unusual at that time; but like another *Apollos*, stood in need of being instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly. We conversed together freely and familiarly; and as he seemed both humble and teachable, I opened to him my view of the gospel and manner of preaching it. What I said met his approbation, and in him I found a dear brother and faithful

* The Rev. Mr. M'Robert.

fellow laborer in the work of the Lord.—We were a great comfort and support to each other, and for many years assisted each other in diffusing the savour of the knowledge of Christ. We frequently visited each other, travelled together, and preached in each others churches—especially on sacramental occasions, where the communicants were so numerous, as to require assistance in the distribution of the *elements*. Our joint labors on these, and many other occasions, I trust, were not in vain in the Lord. Religion revived on all hands, and spread abundantly. He afterwards, in the year 1779, thought it his duty to renounce the church, and is now among the *Presbyterians*. He has never visited me since he left the church, though I have frequently visited him, and have reason to believe he still retains a great regard for me—and what is still of much greater consequence, I believe he still has the cause of God at heart.

Having occasionally mentioned the *sacrament*, it may not be amiss to enlarge a little on that subject, as it may serve to illustrate the low state of religion in the Episcopal church, in Virginia, thirty or forty years ago, and also evince the good effects of

preaching the humbling doctrines of the gospel of free grace, in their simplicity and purity. The sacrament of the supper had been so little regarded, in Virginia, by what were called *Church people*, that, generally speaking, none went to the *table*, except a few of the more aged, perhaps seven or eight at a church. The vast majority of all ages, sexes and classes seemed to think nothing about it, or else thought it a dangerous thing to meddle with. Accordingly, the first time I administered the sacrament here, about seven or eight communed. But as soon as the people got their eyes opened to see their own wants and the necessity of a Saviour, and the nature and design of *the ordinance* was shewn, and the obligation, which all professing Christians are under to remember their dying friend, according to his own institution, the number of communicants increased from time to time, so that in the year 1773, including those who constantly attended from other parishes, the number was, at least, nine hundred or one thousand. A great part of these, I trust, were gracious souls, and such as were truly in earnest to work out their salvation. I did not suppose this to be the case of all, for notwithstanding my *fencing the tables*, by

laying down as clearly as I could, the marks and characters of *such* as were invited, and *such* as were not, and pointing out the danger of unworthy receiving—yet some would go forward, who, as I feared, ought not. This I knew not how to avoid, as I never could get that assistance from others, which was necessary for the Godly discipline of the church. No one man can do this business.

But I had great comfort and satisfaction in this, that among the many hundreds, who attended the *ordinance*, and, in judgment of charity, were sincere souls, I heard no jarring string ;—all seemed to be united in the same mind and judgment—there was no bone of contention, no subject of doubtful disputation. Disputable points had no place in the pulpit, and the same pacific spirit seemed to prevail among the hearers. Contentions were out of the question—it is no wonder, therefore, that genuine religion, the religion of LOVE flourished.

The approach of a communion season diffused pleasure throughout the parish, among all the Godly, and great satisfaction, in common with the rest, have I enjoyed on those occasions. To see so many hundreds convened from different quarters,

joining devoutly in the divine service; to hear them singing the praises of their God and common Saviour, lustily, and with one heart and voice—to see them listening to the word preached, *with attention still! as night*—eagerly drinking in the balmy blessings of the gospel, dispensed by the instrumentality of one, whom they esteemed *their pastor, their teacher, their guide, their father, and their friend*—sweetly communing with me and one another, and myself with all. O, it was a little heaven upon earth—a prelibation of celestial joys. Then could I, with great propriety, adopt the Psalmist's words, and say—"Behold how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." You can recollect some of those delightful seasons, for you have shared in them along with me.

This harmony, though not without some interruption, continued for many years—years much to be remembered, and such as will be remembered, with praise and gratitude, throughout the ages of eternity.

But, oh! the instability of mortal man. Instability, that attendant on all below the skies, has now changed those pleasing prospects, and, in the place thereof, has introduced a most melancholy reverse, and

love and concord are put to flight.—A dismal gloom hath overspread those chearing views—and little, very little satisfaction remains for me, in my declining years. I have found this life a chequered scene indeed. But here is still matter of joy and comfort, that many of those happy souls, who were once so loving and so united here, have long since taken their flight from these abodes of sorrow, and are now safely arrived, where all is love, and joy, and peace.

The steps, which led to this fatal reverse, may properly come under,

The third particular—where I am to treat of incidentals.

Under the two former particulars I mentioned the plan, extent, &c. of my preaching, and also the harmony, love and concord, which subsisted for many years among my hearers, though not without *some interruption*.

This small interruption was occasioned by the *Baptists*, who, about the year 1769 or 1770, or, it may be a little sooner, had begun to make proselytes in *Amelia*, and some other adjacent counties. These, by their assiduity and continual inculcation of adult baptism, and unceasing disputes on

that subject, had shaken the faith of some, and gained them over to their party. The consequence was a total separation from the old church, and from all such as still adhered to her usages. Contentious disputes and discord were introduced, so far as the mischievous notion prevailed. Very few joined the Baptists in my own parish. I cannot recollect any one man of consequence, except *William Harper*, who, you know, lived on the borders of Amelia, where the greatest number of the Baptists was. *Harper* and his wife were prevailed on to go into the water, which proved very detrimental to the interests of *religion*, in that corner of the parish, where it had flourished for some years before this event. But from that time it began to decline in that place. So fatal are the effects of church divisions.

As far as I can judge, I have, at least for thirty years, possessed a truly catholic spirit. I was bigotted to no party whatever; and, I believe you never had any cause to judge otherwise of me. My wish was that souls might be saved, and was willing the Lord should choose his own instruments for that purpose. But it was grievous to me to behold the unity of brethren destroyed, and especially by such notions, as I was, and

am, fully persuaded were nothing but notions, and answered no other end but a bad one—I mean the destruction of love and peace, which christianity is designed to promote. I endeavored to act prudently and inoffensively, and, by lenient methods, I prevented this notion of going into the water, and its evil train of consequences, from breaking into the body of my parish. But I could not prevent its spreading in other counties, where I used sometimes to preach. In these counties many were disunited, and the peace of neighborhoods destroyed. I did what I could to prevent this evil, but it was too much for any one man to do. To prevent these dissensions in the church, as much as possible, was, among others, a reason of my more readily giving countenance to the *Methodists*, when they first made their appearance in this quarter of the *western world*. And though, in the issue, it seems I only *jumpt out of the frying pan into the fire*, yet to my view, at that time, the prospect had a more salutary appearance.

The first Methodist preacher I ever conversed with, or saw, in Virginia, was Mr. Robert Williams, a plain, simple-hearted, pious man. This, I believe, was his general character. He came to my house, in

the year 1772, or 1773. He staid with me near a week, and preached several sermons in the parish, most, or all of which I heard. I liked his preaching in the main, very well, and especially the affectionate and animated manner, in which his discourses were delivered. I had much conversation with him concerning Mr. *Wesley*, and the nature and design of *Methodism*. He informed me, “That the Methodists were true members of the church of England—that their design was to build up, and not to divide the church—that the preachers did not assume the office of priests—administered neither the ordinance of *baptism*, nor the *Lord’s Supper*, but looked to the parish ministers, in all places, for *these*—that they travelled to call sinners to repentance—to join proper subjects in society for mutual edification, and to do all they could for the spiritual improvement of those societies.

Mr. Williams also furnished me with some of their books, and I became acquainted with the minutes of several of their conferences. By these means I was let into their general plan, and that “*He that left the church, left the Methodists.*”—I put a strong mark on *these words*. I felt much attachment to Mr. Williams, and to

other preachers, who came after him. I received them into my house with great cordiality, and treated them with disinterested benevolence. I hoped good would be done, by their means, not only in preserving the unity of the church, and keeping her members from rents and divisions, but also, in calling sinners to repentance, and establishing believers.

As I had been accustomed, before this, to collect and meet the people for religious improvement, I could have no objection to religious societies, or any prudential means that seemed to promise the edification of mankind. I therefore concurred in, and encouraged Christian societies, and exhorted such as had been my hearers, in different parts of Carolina and Virginia, to join in society, and admit the assistance of the Methodist preachers, as helpers of their joy and establishment in religion. In some places where I had before travelled and preached, a number of the people had objections against joining what was called a *Methodist society*. They wished rather to continue in a society, which took its denomination from me. For you must know I had drawn up some rules for society, and had begun to put them in practice, in other places besides my own parish. But the

principal objection against joining in a *Methodist society*, was the *fear* of being led thereby to *dissent* from the *Church of England*—the thought of *which* was very abhorrent from their sentiments. I (believing fully, that the Methodists were really sincere in their professions of attachment to the church) took much pains to remove that objection. For this purpose I rode many a mile, and endeavored to quiet the minds of the people, by shewing them that the Methodists were members of the church, and could not be otherwise, because, *all who left the Church, left the Methodists*.—My endeavors, in this respect, were successful, and many societies were soon established, and preachers were appointed to take charge of them according to the rules of *Methodism*. I believe good was done—and the work spread and prospered for some time.

I have been the more circumstantial in this account, because I have been censured by some, for giving the countenance I did, to the *Methodists*, and to *lay-preachers*—persons, as many supposed, inimical to America, and whose professions of attachment to the church, were judged farcical and insincere. But from what I have said, it must appear to the impartial, that my

views were disinterested, and that what I did, was done in the simplicity of my heart, to promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls. If any of them were disaffected to the American cause, which at that time was depending, they did not let me know it—and if they were insincere in their profession of attachment to the church, it was more than I could possibly know. So that if I erred in giving them the countenance I did, it was an error founded in charity and good will to mankind. *Humanum est errare* is an old observation, and, perhaps, I have erred in the encouragement I gave to *those people*—nor dare I say, I have not—but they have sufficiently punished me for it, as will appear in the sequel.

In the year 1776, the established church, in Virginia, was put down, and all her ministers were deprived of their livings. The consequence of which was, that several parishes, one after another, became vacant of officiating priests, so that the ordinances of *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*, could not so conveniently be obtained, in some places, as formerly. To remedy this inconvenience, some of the *lay-preachers* undertook to ordain themselves, and make priests of one another. This, I remember, they

called a *step*—but I considered it as a prodigious *stride*—a most unwarrantable usurpation, and a flagrant violation of all order. This long *step* was taken, I believe, in 1777 or 1778. I previously advised them against the step—but to no purpose—my advice was treated with contempt—the trump of war was blown against me, their old friend and benefactor : and, you may be sure, dirt and filth enough were thrown at me, by those *self-created* priests and their adherents. Your uncle, colonel Thomas Bedford, to whom I had been as dear as a parent, drew his pen against me, and laid about him stoutly. But I said nothing, and the good old man was soon ashamed of his unprovoked attack. All this time I kept myself within my old lines, went on in my old tract, and got little damage from the discharge of any of them. Though I was sorry my old friends should be so furious against me without a cause. But as yet I had no conception that the *spirit*, by which *these* were actuated, was but a specimen of the same *spirit*, which, as I now find, pervades the whole body.

Mr. Asbury was, at that time, cooped up in the small state of Delaware, suspected, with some more of his brethren, of being an enemy to the liberties of *America*.

However the report of the new-created priesthood reached him, in his retreat, and as he was a *wonderful friend* of the old church, seemed to touch him very sensibly. He had also heard the report of some of those deep throated engines which had been levelled at me, and it appeared that he supposed the fire had been well directed, and I had got no more than my deserts. On these double reports, he wrote me a long letter, in which he informed me, that his mind had been under some very undue, or unfavorable impressions respecting me, and, in an enigmatical way, asked, "Is it a time to receive vine-yards and olive-yards, and to receive *money* and garments, &c." I knew what he meant—but he had received a *false* report—for, in good truth, I know not that I had, for some time, received as much *money* as would buy me a shirt, much less vineyards, &c. &c. But I took it as from whence it originated and came, and cared little about the matter. He also expostulated with me concerning the *step* which had been taken, by the *preachers*, and asked me how I could stand by, and see those *children* act so extravagantly and foolishly, (or something similar) and charged me to exert all my powers

to reduce them to the church again, and to their former order. But I was sensible I could do nothing with them.

Some time after this letter was received, Mr. Asbury got liberty, and came down to Virginia, and by his influence and address, reclaimed several of the delinquents, and the *step* was retracted. Now was I again held in high esteem. No conference was held in this part of Virginia, but I must be at it; and instead of the bitter and rough letters I was wont to receive, during the defection, I had packets sweet and smooth as oil. They had accused me of inconstancy—but now they found that the accusation had been misapplied, and was applicable to themselves, and not to me.

In order to remedy the complaint of the want of ordinances, and to render them steady to the church, in future, I took some long rides through several circuits, to baptize their children, administer the sacrament, &c. All which I did without fee or reward—and I continued so to do, as long as the Methodists stood to their profession.

I think it was in the spring, in the year 1784, that I was at a conference at *Ellis's*, in this state. At which conference, Mr.

Asbury was still striving to render an attachment to the church yet more firm and permanent. For this end he had brought with him Mr. Wesley's *twelve reasons* against a separation from the church, which are as follow :

REASONS

Against a separation from the Church of England.

“ *Whether it be lawful or no (which itself may be disputed, being not so clear a point as some may imagine) it is by no means expedient for us to separate from the established church :*

“ 1. *Because it would be a contradiction to the solemn and repeated declarations, which we have made in all manner of ways, in preaching, in print, and in private conversation :*

“ 2. *Because (on this as well as many other accounts) it would give huge occasion of offence to those who seek and desire occasion, to all the enemies of GOD and his truth.*

“ 3. *Because it would exceedingly prejudice against us many who fear, yea, who love GOD, and thereby hinder their receiving so much, perhaps any, farther benefit from our preaching :*

“ 4. Because it would hinder multitudes of those who neither love nor fear GOD, from bearing us at all, and thereby leave them in the hands of the devil :

“ 5. Because it would occasion many hundreds, if not some thousands of those who are now united with us, to separate from us ; yea, and some of those who have a deep work of grace in their souls :

“ 6. Because it would be throwing balls of wild-fire among them that are now quiet in the land. We are now sweetly united together in love. We mostly think and speak the same thing. But this would occasion inconceivable strife and contention, between those who left, and those who remained in the church, as well as between those who left us, and those who remain with us : Nay, and between those very persons who remained, as they were variously inclined one way or the other :

“ 7. Because, whereas controversy is now asleep, and we in great measure live peaceably with all men, so that we are strangely at leisure to spend our whole time and strength, in enforcing plain, practical, vital religion, (O ! what would many of our forefathers have given, to have enjoyed so blessed a calm ?) This would utterly banish peace from among

us, and that without hope of its return. It would engage me for one, in a thousand controversies, both in public and private ; (for I should be in conscience obliged to give the reasons of my conduct, and to defend those reasons against all opposers) and so take me off from those more useful labours, which might otherwise employ the short remainder of my life :

“ 8. Because to form the plan of a New Church would require infinite time and care, (which might be far more profitably bestow'd,) with much more wisdom and greater depth and extensiveness of thought, than any of us are masters of :

“ 9. Because from some having barely entertained a distant thought of this, evil fruits have already followed, such as prejudice against the clergy in general ; an aptness to believe ill of them ; contempt (not without a degree of bitterness) of clergymen as such, and a sharpness of language toward the whole order, utterly unbecoming either gentlemen or christians :

“ 10. Because the experiment has been so frequently tried already, and the success has never answered the expectation. GOD has

since the reformation raised up from time to time many witnesses of pure religion. If these liv'd and died (like John Arndt, Robert Bolton and many others) in the churches to which they belonged, notwithstanding the wickedness which overflow'd both the teachers and people therein; they spread the leaven of true religion far and wide, and were more and more useful, till they went to paradise. But if upon any provocation or consideration whatever, they separated and founded distinct parties, their influence was more and more confined; they grew less and less useful to others, and generally lost the spirit of religion themselves in the spirit of controversy:

“ 11. *Because we have melancholy instances of this, even now before our eyes. Many have in our memory left the church, and formed themselves into distinct bodies. And certainly some of them, from a real persuasion, that they should do GOD more service. But have any separated themselves and prospered? Have they been either more holy, or more useful than they were before?*

“ 12. *Because by such a separation we should not only throw away the peculiar glorying which GOD has given us, That we do and will suffer all things for our brethren's sake, though the more we love them, the less we be*

loved : but should act in direct contradiction to that very end, for which we believe God hath raised us up. The chief design of his Providence in sending us out, is undoubtedly, to quicken our brethren—and the first message of all our preachers is, to the lost sheep of the church of England. Now would it not be a flat contradiction to this design, to separate from the church? These things being considered, we cannot apprehend, whether it be lawful in itself or no, that it is lawful for us : were it only on this ground, that it is by no means expedient.”

*These, no doubt, he read, and commented on.—And who would suppose, that, before the close of this same year, he and the whole body of Methodists broke off from the church, at a single stroke!—What mighty magic was able to effect so great a change in one day!—It was certainly the greatest change (apparently at least) that ever was known to take place, in so short a time, since the foundation of a christian church was laid. They embraced a new faith, and it shewed itself by their works, for from that memorable period, *old things were done away*—their *old mother*, to whom they had avowed so much duty and fidelity, was discarded, and violently opposed.—*

Yea, it seemed as if they would have torn her limb from limb, and deprived her of every *member*.—And *those*, which they could not tear off, shall not escape their resentment. Of consequence I could not escape. I became a principal *butt*—a great eye sore—for to the church I still clave, and ever intend to cleave as long as I live. You may be sure I have been well battered; and others have, in some measure, shared my fate. In good and candid truth, such a spirit has prevailed, and doth yet prevail, to increase and establish that *novel institution*, that the reputation of no man, however holy and useful he may be, has been too sacred, to escape the lashes of malignant tongues.

Who can account for such a conduct among the professors of that religion, which enjoins, *to speak evil of no man*?—and saith, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*. I sincerely wish to lay the most charitable construction on their conduct to me and others. It may be, they are misled, and hurried on by false and furious zeal. Surely they do not mean to do such execrable things, knowing them to be so. It may be, that, often hearing their own party, their own modes, rules and principles so highly applauded, and all

others vilified, they have conceived a notion, that when they are venting the most *shameful slander* against any, who are not of their party, they are acting right, and doing no more than they ought to do. I dare say, this may be the case, and I wish it may—as I would willingly excuse them, as much as I can, and retain the best opinion of my fellow-creatures the case will admit of.

But, by this time, you wish to know what crimes they lay to my charge. Why they have revived the old charge of inconstancy—however this is so evidently misapplied, that it is not much insisted on—yet it goes down with some classes. But the most potent charge is, that I have *an itching palm*, and am a great *money sweeper*. And indeed almost all their charges center in this one. I sweep, it seems, fifteen or twenty pound for a single sermon, &c. &c. But you know me better, and will believe me, when I tell you, that I have swept so little for all my labors in the gospel, that, for these thirteen years, I may say, with the apostle, *these hands of mine have administered to my necessities, and to those that are with me*. In all my travels and preachings before the revolution, I never received a single farthing—nor since, except when I

have undertaken to supply a vacant parish statedly—but this has seldom happened: and once I was complimented with about ten dollars in Carolina. Funeral sermons I have generally preached gratis, and marriages have not been very considerable.

But however ill founded those *sweeping* charges have been, yet the malignant effects of this surprising conduct of my enemies to defame and depreciate my character, preachings and writings, are very apparent. Let aspersions, sly insinuations, and slanderous reports be ever so groundless, yet, when they come from a great number, and are often repeated, as well from the pulpit as in private, they are apt to make undue impressions on vulgar minds, and alienate the affections of the people from the injured person. This is realized in my own case; for I have found the minds of the people, in my own parish, and in other places, so alienated from me, by such means, that my usefulness, at present, seems to be at an end.

When I now go to places, where formerly some hundreds used to attend my sermons, I can scarcely get forty hearers; and, perhaps, the minds of most of those are so stuffed with prejudice, and they hear in such a cautious and captious way, that

little good can be expected. I say, they hear in a cautious and captious way—for you must know I am accused of preaching *bad doctrine*—at least such a thing is insinuated by some, and others are more pointed in contradicting the truths I advance, and have advanced for more than thirty years. But it is truly laughable to hear doctrines established and taught by the greatest divines, for so many centuries, now condemned as execrable, by those, who never studied divinity in their lives, nor never read any system of theology whatever. Imputed righteousness, is what I particularly refer to.

In my own parish also, I have the mortification to behold those, who were once my near and dear friends, yea my children in the gospel, fall off from me, and join with my most notorious enemies. Instead of crowded churches, as formerly, my hearers seldom exceed, on Sundays, one hundred and fifty, and, for the most part, hardly half that number. The communicants have decreased ten-fold. Love and harmony are gone—so that I have little satisfaction at communion seasons. In a word, there appears such a degree of shyness, coldness and disaffection among the people, and they look so strange at me,

that I can take no satisfaction in the company of any, except a few of the old standards. In this uncomfortable situation, I often call to mind better days, and with great sensibility repeat those lines in the 42d psalm :

'Tis with a mournful pleasure now,
I think on ancient days ;
When to *the Church* did numbers go,
And all our work was praise.

I before observed, that if I did err in giving countenance to the Methodists, on their first coming to Virginia, *they have since sufficiently punished me for it*—and by this time, I think you are of the same mind.

But though I can attribute the too general coolness of professions to me, both here and elsewhere, to nothing so much as the machinations of the Methodists—yet that almost universal inattention to religion, which now prevails, in this state, must be traced to some other source. Human nature is strangely indisposed to all things holy and divine; and, at present, many things abound, which have a tendency to confirm that aversion, and render men more and more indifferent about religious matters. Some of the staunch disciples of

Voltaire, men of great reputation in the political world, have revived the principles of their master, and made some daring attempts on our holy religion, with a design to bring the whole of Christianity into discredit. True, they have not been able to forge, and bring on to the charge any new kind of offensive armour, but came out with the same old train of *artillery*, vamped up afresh, with the addition of some new devices thereon, *which* has been tried, and tried again, to no effect. However, it may do more spoil now, than formerly, on this account, because the morals of mankind have become so corrupt, and their rage for sensual and unlimited gratification so great, that they would gladly seize on any pretext for casting off the restraints of the Bible.

But for my own part, I have no great dread, that any mighty execution will be done, by *Thomas Paine*, or any other writer of his stamp; nor indeed by any weapons of the open and profest enemies of the Christian church. I can rely on the promise of God that *no weapons formed against his church shall prosper*. I am much more afraid of the profest, though misguided friends of *religion*, than of *her* declared

enemies. I am verily persuaded, that many zealous professors of religion, by their irregular and disorderly, though, perhaps, well meant proceedings, have done more to the discredit and prejudice of our holy religion, than all the *deists* and *infidels* in the world. When we consider what forbidding appearances have assumed the name of religion—yea, have been held up as great marks of religion—when we reflect on the multitudes of ignorant and unexperienced men, of all ranks and colours, who, because they supposed they had a *call*, have been encouraged to preach—when we call to mind the frequent appointments for meetings, that all these may exercise their talents—when we listen to the jargon and wild notions of such preachers, and behold their furious gestures, &c. what could we reasonably expect, as the consequence, but that men would be disgusted and fatigued, nauseated and rendered indifferent about attending on any of the institutions of religion. This disgust, nausea and fatigue are pretty general at present; and, if I am not mistaken, they have, in a great measure, originated from *this source*.

I doubt not but most of those weak and unqualified men suppose they are *called* to preach, and that they are actuated by a zeal

of doing good—but I rather judge, that pride is the principal mover. God is not the author of confusion. My judgment, in this matter, is founded on my knowledge of human nature, in general, and my own experience, in particular. And here I will insert a little anecdote respecting myself. In my former letter, I mentioned my having meetings for prayer, reading, &c. soon after I had some acquaintance with religion. In doing this, I thought I was actuated by the purest and most laudable principles. But being, one evening, in company with an older and more experienced christian, I simply related to him my practice of meeting and the effects my efforts seemed to have on my hearers. The gentleman looked grave on the occasion, and, instead of his approbation, which, no doubt, I expected, he gave me a little history of his own proceedings. “When religion, *said he*, first broke out in these parts (*Henrico and Hanover*) I used to hold meetings in our meeting-house, for prayer, reading, &c. and large congregations attended—the people were frequently much affected, and I thought my zeal for their souls was so great and ardent, that I could freely have laid my head under their feet, to promote their happiness, by turning

them to the Lord : but, *added he*, after a while I found a devil of pride lay at the bottom of all my exertions."—He made no application, nor was it necessary, for I felt the words applied with great power to my heart—I saw my own picture drawn to the life—I was ashamed and confounded, in the presence of the venerable man—when I discovered the same *devil* to lurk and predominate in my own heart, which I had not before discovered, nor even suspected. It was a good lesson to me, and I endeavored to profit by it. It is not therefore without a cause, that I am led to judge that pride is a principal agent in the mission of many in our day. Human nature is the same now, as when I was a young man. And as it may not be the fortune of every one to meet with such a judicious monitor, as I did, I fear pride reigns in many hearts undiscovered, for a long time. Indeed the manner, in which many young volunteers are now treated, tends rather to foster pride, than to discover and destroy it. I believe it is no uncommon thing for a young and bold adventurer, who is good at *vociferation*, to be cried up as a *great preacher*, an *useful preacher*, a *zealous preacher*, and such like—all which directly tend to confirm a man in his blindness, and blow him

up like a bladder. I can hardly think the real interests of religion will ever be promoted by such instruments, whatever present effects, on the passions, their efforts may have. I may be mistaken—but this is my judgment.

The state of religion, at this time, is gloomy and distressing, and the church of Christ seems to be sunk very low. But this will not always be the case. I believe she will yet arise, and shake herself from the dust, and become a praise in this *western world*. Whenever this happy period shall arrive, the blessed change will be effected, by able ministers of the New Testament, duly qualified, and regularly introduced into the sacred office, according to the order of God's word. Churches will be established and built up in ancient faith, under the care of their own *stated* and *settled* pastors. This was the order pointed out by the apostle, and ought to be duly observed. Profane history informs us of *peripatetic philosophers*—but *peripatetic pastors* is a novelty in the Christian church. This *peripatetic* plan, as far as I can see, has not only no countenance from scripture, but is, in its very nature, subversive of the unity of the Christian church. Will

any one deny that the scriptures are for *stated* and *settled* pastors over particular churches? But how is it possible for *stated pastors* to maintain love, unity, harmony and peace, among their respective flocks, while such a number of *peripatetics* are continually intruding upon their province, and seeking by all means to draw away disciples after them?—Upon the whole, if it be scriptural that every church should have its own *stated minister*, then the contrary is unscriptural, and must come to nought, whenever the church shall appear in her beauty and splendor, and command the respect she deserves.

The order and regulations of the Protestant Episcopal Church are, in my opinion, as apostolic, as any church whatever; and from the decency and edifying system of her public worship, as well as from former interpositions of Divine Providence in her favor, I am led to think she will yet see better days, than at present—she will yet arise and shake herself from the dust, and be, in some measure, respected, according to her real worth.—I have no expectation I shall live to see this—but shall die in the hope of it.

Seeing I have so high an opinion of our church, and my expectations of her future

prosperity and glory are so great, you may wonder I do not more constantly attend her annual *conventions* of clergy and laity, in Virginia. But I have reasons for absenting myself from *these*, which appear satisfactory to me, though they may not appear so to you and others. These reasons I will here simply write down.

I have already mentioned the unkind disposition of the clergy towards me from the beginning. They always seemed to look at me with an evil eye, and therefore there was little or no intercourse between them and myself. However, in the year 1774, I went to one of their conventions, which they used to hold, in the city of Williamsburg, for certain purposes. At that convention, I was causelessly insulted, and treated in such an ungenteel, not to say unchristian, manner, as, till that time, I had been a stranger to—and, what was still worse, I was distressed to hear some of the most sacred doctrines of Christianity treated with ridicule and profane burlesque. You may be sure I went to no more of their conventions at *Williamsburg*.

After the revolution, and the removal of the seat of government from Williamsburg to Richmond, several conventions of the clergy were held, at the place last menti-

oned, to consult on church affairs—the establishment then being done away. But I was sensible I could have no weight in any convention, as long as the disposition of the clergy toward me continued as it was, and therefore I went not to any of their conventions.

Some time after the peace between *Great-Britain* and *America* was concluded, our state assembly incorporated the Protestant Episcopal Church, by a law—and a convention was then called, at Richmond, to devise rules for our ecclesiastical government: many clergymen and delegated laymen attended on the occasion. I also went. But I found such a shyness and coldness still prevailed among the clergy toward me, that even those, with whom I had some acquaintance, would hardly speak to me, or seem to know me, fearing, as I might suppose, lest they should chance to be treated as coolly as I was, by their taking any notice of me. I felt very disagreeable in my situation among them, and, after about two hours, took my departure, and returned no more for five or six years. Indeed I thought I had done with conventions forever.—

But in the year 1790, a bishop was to be elected, and a full convention was de-

sired on the occasion. I was written to by the standing committee, and my presence was solicited. I attended, and Dr. Madison was elected for our bishop, by a great majority. Some notice was taken of me at this convention, and I was nominated to read prayers on one of the mornings while I staid there. In a word, several both of the clergy and laity spake to me, with a degree of freedom, I had not known before, and I began to hold up my head, and open my mouth in the convention. I hoped there was an alteration for the better—and I resolved to go to the convention, in the year 1791.

I did so—and was received with much cordiality. Here that canon, which stands the sixth additional canon, was fabricated, and brought before the committee of the whole house. This canon I opposed, with all my might, as being most abhorrent to my mind: and after a lengthy debate, it was thrown out by a majority of six. But the aspect of that canon, and other things, which I thought savoured *more of men than of God*, gave me some uneasiness, and my hopes of a change for the better, began to subside. Before the convention broke up, I was appointed to preach at the next convention. We all parted in peace.

In the year 1792, we met in convention again. I preached according to appointment—and this was the last sermon, which has been preached before any of our conventions. My sermon was approved by the convention, and a vote past for its publication. The next day I was on the committee for devising rules for carrying certain general canons into effect, especially those which relate to *discipline* and the taking the number of *Episcopalians*. But the rules were rejected, and the whole business laid over to a future day—which has not yet come. I saw the reason of this was of a pecuniary nature, and that nothing was to be done, if temporal interests were to be threatened. I thought it was then time for me to retire. I considered that the intent of meeting was to make rules—and if the rules already made were not to be observed, I thought it needless to make any new ones. Going to conventions appeared a needless expence of time and treasure. Indeed, as I told you in a letter some time ago, we do not want rules, so much as men. Men I cannot make—and experience has shewn me, that I cannot introduce *proper subjects* into the ministerial office, nor prevent *improper* from entering. Of this I

had sufficient experience before I reached home from the convention, I am now speaking of.

The bishop was to hold an ordination at Petersburg, immediately after the convention, and I was desired to go by that place to assist in examining the *candidates*. I did so—and for good reasons I refused two of *them*. But what did that avail? Another clergyman was called in, and I had the mortification to hear *both* ordained the same day. I say *hear*, for it was a sight I did not wish to *see*.

Now, if you, or any one, can tell me what possible end it can answer for me to go to conventions, I shall be obliged, and will act accordingly. But as I am persuaded no good end can be attained by my going, I shall think I may be better employed, by staying away.

I shall, for the present, break off my narrative, and close this letter, by assuring you

I remain,

Your sincere friend,

And Brother in the Gospel,

D. JARRATT.

P. S. Should any matters occur worth mentioning, I shall make them the subject of another letter.

LETTER III.

Bath, January 17, 1795.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THIS is the day of my nativity:—I have now lived in the world just sixty-two years ; and am entering on the sixty-third, which is usually termed the grand climacteric. What great changes may befall me, this year, I cannot foresee, nor am I anxious to know—but as wisdom and prudence dictate, and religion enjoins, I purpose, by divine grace, to make it my study and endeavor to be ready for all events—whether of prosperity or adversity—ease or pain—sickness or health—life or death.—To him, who is truly devoted to God, nothing can fall out unfortunate or premature. “All things shall work together for good to them that love God, and are called according to his purpose.” To such even crosses and afflictions are blessings in dis-

guise; and though, for the present, they be not joyous but grievous, yet will they be attended with no real and lasting injury, but rather serve to purge from dross—refine the soul, and stud the crown of life with richer gems.

Few men, perhaps, have enjoyed a greater share of health than I have, in the general course of my life: though I have had some portion of affliction and chastisement, and that of the most painful kind. Sixteen years ago, I was attacked with a calculous disorder, which was attended with extreme pain, for six or seven months—though not without frequent intermissions. But at last, by the kindness of God, I was relieved by passing a flinty stone near the size of a bean. From that time I felt little pain, or inconvenience, from that quarter, for about eight years. I was then attacked again with great violence. But after struggling with the disorder from April till November following, I passed another *stone* of a much larger size than the first. *This* was about an inch round. From that time to the present hour, I have had scarce any symptoms of a calculous complaint. It is now about eight years since the second stone came away.—I mention this now, because it was omitted in my for-

mer letters, and because I would have it numbered among other very great and singular favors, which I have received at the hands of God, and which ought to be recorded with gratitude and praise.

An uninterrupted series of health and prosperity is seldom the lot of mortals in this world: few could share that lot, and improve it to advantage. *It is good for me,* said the psalmist, *that I have been afflicted.* Pain, as a great poet hath said, is *Heaven's last effort of good will to man—When pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair.* By the suspension of health, we learn to estimate its value; and by how much the more excruciating the pains we suffer, by so much the more sensible are we of the blessing of health, and of the goodness and mercy of God in sending relief, and restoring our wonted vigour. Of all *maladies* incident to mankind, *that* of the stone and gravel is thought to be the most painful and excruciating—and as it hath pleased the Lord to lay this *infliction* on me, with kind and gracious intent—and also, in his own good time, to send repeated *relief*, my prayer is that I may make a right improvement both of the *one* and the *other*.

I have had a slight attack of a bilious complaint this winter; however, I am

much relieved at present, so that I sit up all day, and read and write, as usual—though I go but little out of doors. But I am seldom free from one complaint or another, and am daily reminded that I am an old man. My greatest complaint, at this time, is a tumor, of a very extraordinary nature, on the left side of my face, which at times, is painful, but has no appearance of coming to a head, though it has been there for many months. The greatest disadvantage arising from it is, that it so affects my left eye, that frequently I can neither see to read nor write. My *right eye* is not affected by it, but *this* I have not seen to read nor write with, for above thirty years. I believe the sight of my right eye was lost by the pain, which followed the small pox, which pain I mentioned in a former letter.

However I consider all things as proceeding from God's continued good will toward me, and intended to remind me, that this earth is not my place of rest—that here I have no abiding city—and that I ought to wean my heart and affections from this world, as the time draws near, when I shall be no longer fit to act my part in it. Therefore, in devotion to God, my creator and liberal benefactor, and in the continual habit of practical religion, would I say,

with Job, *All the days of my appointed time, (be they few or many) will I wait, till my change come.*

The late Dr. Franklin, in the memoirs of his own life, states the case that should an offer be made him of living life over again, he would accept it, on condition of being allowed the privilege of an author, to correct in a second edition of life the errors of the first : but concludes with saying, that he would not decline the offer, though that privilege were denied him, and he should be limited to the identical steps he had already trod. I think it was childish in the doctor to state such a case, though I would allow to such a *lucky life* as his *some perquisites of joy*.—But the case was so improbable, not to say impossible, that it reminds me of an old saying among the Scotch (intended, I suppose, to ridicule something like that of Franklin (“ if the sky should fall, it would kill the larks.”—However, I imagine what the doctor intended was to express his wish of continuing in this world another three-score years and ten, at least ; and perhaps the pleasure he had enjoyed in being serviceable to his country and individuals might, with some propriety, dictate such a wish. But

I cannot say that I am of this great man's mind in this. I would rather say, with St. Paul, *What I should choose I wot not* : I have lived long enough to know there is no permanent happiness in this world—that all its comforts and enjoyments are fleeting and unsatisfying—mixed with many bitter ingredients, and attended with many a sting.

To be allowed the privilege of correcting in a second edition of life the errors of the first, might seem an inducement to enter on a second career, if the consideration of human weakness and depravity were left out of the account. But if taken into the account, it would weaken the inducement; because it is more than probable that such a privilege would avail but little; and instead of correcting errors, our corruptions might hurry us on to greater blunders than before. At least, in like circumstances, like actions would ensue; or else we might run into greater extremes on the one hand, while striving to avoid errors on the other. Upon the whole, though nature is always abhorrent to dissolution, yet, instead of suppositions, and stating idle cases, it is certainly best to submit to the just and wise disposals of Providence, in this and all other things, and not be anxious about

how *long*, or *how short*, but *how well*, or *holy*, we may live.

The most important thing, for which a *wise* man would wish to live here, is, that he might acquire a greater degree of *holiness* and *maturity* in grace, and be *beneficial to mankind*. If I know my own heart, *these* are, and have been for some time, the principal motives of my wishing *to abide longer in the flesh*. No doubt there have been other motives besides these. In time of sickness, which is usually a time of serious reflection, I have looked inward, and have been mortified to discover what small improvements I have made in divine love and holiness—and how far I have been from a due conformity to the image of God. I have also discovered such a variety and multiplicity of great imperfections, which have clave to all my attempts in the service of God, both as a Christian and a minister, that I have been grieved and distressed, and wished to live longer, that I might use greater diligence, and be more ardent to obtain such degrees of grace as would render me more like God—enable me to serve him better, and labour more zealously and sincerely in the salvation of souls.—But after repeated trials, I find my proper *motto* still is, “ Less than the least of all

saints.”—I find this world to be a climate very unfavorable to the growth and improvement of every thing holy, spiritual and divine—so that I am sometimes tempted to think I shall never be much better prepared for heaven, than I now am, though I should live to the age of six-score years and ten. However, I will not limit the Most High—I will still call upon him, as long as I live, for a greater maturity in grace—I will plead the promises of sanctification, and beseech the Lord to make me holy, as he is holy, and to fill me with all the life of love. I will also endeavor, God being my helper, to divest myself of every undue attachment to things of time, and of every wish of continuing here any longer than I can be useful.

That God would help both you and me to be faithful unto death, that we may receive a crown of life, is the fervent prayer of

Dear, and respected sir,

Your sincere friend,

And Brother in Christ,

D. JARRATT.

LETTER IV.

Bath, March 2d, 1795.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

MY last letter, though begun the 17th January, I did not finish till to-day. This has been occasioned by some engagements of a different nature, and especially by compiling, writing and preparing for the press a small volume of hymns, intended more especially for plain Christians of every denomination. It is needless to give you a farther account of the work at present, as it will speak for itself when published, and the public will judge for themselves respecting its merit, or demerit.

In a former letter I mentioned my worthy and much respected friend, Mr. M'Robert—how we laboured together for several years—and his defection from the old church, &c.

When I heard of his public recantation and abjuration of the church in which he

was ordained, and in the service of which he had so faithfully labored for twenty years, you may be sure it was not a little astonishing, and I wrote him several letters to know the cause of his revolt. It was some time however before he favored me with any answer to my anxious enquiries. But after repeated importunities, he at last sent an answer, in a letter of some considerable length. As the contents of that letter, and of my answer to it, may not be unacceptable to you, and my inserting them here may properly be considered as a part of the memoirs of my life, I shall give you a copy of them nearly at full length.

To the Rev. Mr. DEVEREUX JARRATT.

Providence, July 13, 1780.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

IN the course of this summer I have been favored with two letters from you, and am truly concerned that I have had no opportunity of making any return. But such are our present circumstances that hardly any one, from our parts, travel towards Petersburg. It would have given me much pleasure to have been able to have called on you in my return from Chesterfield; but I

was hurried home on two accounts *of a temporal nature*.

It grieves me to hear of the state of religion with you, though I apprehend it is a general case ; and, indeed, no more than I expected. Its revival, I am persuaded, will never commence in the church ; nor can its decaying interests be maintained or supported by national establishments.—Christ's kingdom is not of this world ; neither can it acquire strength or stability from human police. Upon re-examining matters, I had the mortification to discover that I had erred in my judgment and choice, with respect to the established church ; and accordingly I solemnly renounced that error, October 31, 1779, before all the people. I found upon enquiry, that the English church is a mere human constitution, that owes all its authority to an act of the legislature, and not to the word of God—prostituting the sacred institutions of Christ to the vilest purposes and characters—that it claims an absolute power of binding the consciences of all to an implicit observance of its forms and usages—that it does not appear to me that Christ has any where, in his word, invested it with any such power, but the direct contrary. Upon the strictest enquiry,

it appears to me that the church of Christ is truly and properly independent: and I am now a dissenter under that denomination. Ecclesiastical matters among the Presbyterians, I find, every day verging towards my sentiments, and will, I believe, terminate there. There is but very little that divides us even now: they constantly attend my poor ministry: several of Mr. *Sanckey's* people have joined my congregation, and I have lately had a most delightful communion season at Cumberland, where I assisted Mr. Smith, at the urgent request of himself and the elders. Soon after my dissent, as my concern for the people had suffered no change, I drew up a set of articles including the essential parts of natural and revealed religion, together with the constitution and discipline of the Christian church, and proposed them to their consideration; since which they have formed a congregation at the *chapel*, and a few have acceded at *French's* and *Sandy river**. I preach at the churches by permission, and intend to continue, God willing, till the first of January; at which time, if congregations should not be formed at the

* These are the distinguishing names of the three churches in the parish, of which he had been minister.

lower churches, my time will be confined to the chapel, and such other place or places, as providence may point out, and the good Spirit of God unite his people at.

I would, with pleasure, have complied with your request, and sent you a copy of this poor performance; but have neither paper nor time to transcribe it.—I ardently long to see you, but, unless you could ride up, shall not have it in my power soon.

The *methodists* are a designing people, void of the generous and catholic spirit of the gospel—and so entirely under the influence of POPE JOHN—and countenance so many illiterate creatures void of all prudence and discretion that I have no expectation of any good and lasting effects from their misguided zeal. Their professed adherence to the church is amazingly preposterous and disingenuous, and nothing but policy either in England or here.

I have now given a detail of all that relates to my conduct and change of principle, &c. with that openness and freedom, I have hitherto observed, and ever wish to observe to my dear brother.—Your better judgment may be surprized, and see reason to differ in sentiment and conduct—but

your christian candour will make allowance for a weak brother.—I fervently wish and pray that you may ever be endued with the spirit of wisdom and discernment—and every divine gift whereby you may excel, and abundantly promote the divine glory.—My family, through mercy, are well, and join in our most cordial good wishes to yourself and dear Mrs. Jarratt.—Blessed be the bountiful author of all mercy, the harvest fields have been crowned with plenty in these parts, and the season for gathering in has been favourable.—That grace, mercy and peace, and all the blessings of the new covenant may be the happy portion of you and yours, is the real deserve of

Your most affectionate brother,

ARCHIBALD M'ROBERT.

I have given you Mr. M'Robert's letter at full length, (a few words excepted respecting his domestic affairs) that the motives leading him to dissent from the church may appear in their true light, and that the amiableness of his spirit and disposition may also appear. Many ill-natured reflections have been thrown out against him, or cast upon him, on account of his

defection from the church ;—but whether he was right or wrong in so doing, I think it will appear to the impartial and unprejudiced, that he was governed by no sinister views ;—nor was he influenced by any pecuniary consideration.—To his letter I wrote an answer, the purport of which I shall here write down, as followeth :—

Bath, August 2, 1780.

THE REV. ARCHIBALD M'ROBERT.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

YOUR's of the 13th ult. came safe to hand last night. It always affords me a singular pleasure to get a *letter* from you. *This* I have read over several times, and am greatly delighted with the candor and openness in which you write and express your present *sentiments*, and give your reasons for the change of your former *ones*. My brother, I feel a sweet union of spirit with you—and I am verily persuaded that your *change* of sentiment will never change or abate the fervor of my affection for you, in the least.—We have long laboured together—and together have borne the burden and heat of the day.—We walked by the same rule, and, I believe, minded the

same things.—I greatly desired to know what your letter informs me, ever since I heard, by vague reports, that you had ceased to walk by the same rule with me, in externals, as formerly; and for this cause I so repeatedly wrote to you on the subject: I need not therefore tell you how much I am obliged for the information your epistle contains, and your affectionate expressions of brotherly love.

With respect to my own sentiments, they have suffered no change at all—but, like your *concern for the people*, they are identically the same as when I first had the pleasure and happiness of becoming acquainted with you.—I dearly love the church. I love her on many accounts—particularly for the three following. 1st. I love her, because her mode of public worship is so beautiful and decent, so well calculated to inspire devotion, and so complete in all the parts of a public worship. 2d. I love her, because of the soundness of her doctrines, creeds, articles, &c. 3d. I love her, because all her *officers*, and the mode of ordaining *them*, are, if I mistake not, truly primitive and apostolic. Bishops, priests and deacons were, in my opinion, distinct orders in the church, in her earliest and purest ages. These *three par-*

ticalars, a regular clergy, sound doctrine, clergy, and a decent, comprehensive worship, &c. have tain the essentials, I think, of a christian yet it church. And as *these* are in the possession of the old church, I have been, and still am, inclined to give her the preference.—Her being at this time under a cloud, does not by no means lessen my esteem for her: but on the contrary, I feel myself more attached to the episcopal church, since she has lost her emoluments and the smiles of government, than ever I was before. “A brother loveth at all times, and a friend was made for adversity.” I wish it had been in your power to have continued in this respect, even as I.

With regard to the hierarchy of the church, in England, and many things, extremely nugatory, which afforded matter of great contention and animosity, in the days of Henry, Elizabeth, &c. I apprehend that I have nothing to do with them, be they right or wrong.—I never troubled my head about arch-bishops, arch-deacons, deans, chapters, proctors, &c.—The creation of such orders and officers might be thought convenient and necessary for some good purposes, for ought I know; but they did not affect me; and I gave myself no

same rn about them. But as I saw, or what I saw, in the church *those essentials* mentioned above, I shall always think myself safe to abide where I am. But my thinking so, I confess, is no rule for others I—and therefore am willing every one should judge, according as he is fully persuaded in his own mind.

You say, with truth, *Christ's kingdom is not of this world*: yet, as the counsels of God are brought into effect by secondary causes, so, I apprehend, the church of Christ is not independent on such causes for her support and well being in this world. If I am not mistaken, it is an ordinance of Heaven, that kings shall be the nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers of Christ's church here below. Undoubtedly, Christ is the supreme head of his church, but yet, he makes use of the powers of this world, as secondary causes, or instruments in his hand, for her support, and advantage. If this is not the case, I think it would be hard, or impossible to understand and apply many of the prophecies, promises and declarations of holy writ, what would become of the woman (the church) when the serpent pours a flood from his mouth to carry her away, if the earth afforded no help. Rev. 12. 16.

Let it be acknowledged, that the clergy, in this state, for many years past, have not been what they ought to be: yet it must be apparent to every man, that religion was more respected and revered, and had a greater influence on the manners of men in general, while the church had the countenance of the state, than it has now.—And let me ask, when God has removed the light of the gospel from any nation, (as he has from many,) whether that which made way for this, has not been the withdrawing temporal succours from the church? Mankind are, by nature, so depraved, and have such a rooted enmity to the purity and holiness of the gospel, that without the aids of government, I verily believe, in a few years, the ordinances of grace would cease in all the world.—It may be said, Is not God able to support his church and gospel institutions without the help of man? No doubt, he is able. He is able to work miracles every day, and to do what he pleases without employing any subordinate, or secondary causes. But the question is, Is this agreeable to the divine constitution, and the modes of his government and proceeding in all ages of the world?—Has he not ordained the most likely means to accomplish his ends. And has he not, except in rare

instances, ever made use of subordinate causes to carry his purposes into effect? Who can deny this? And have we any reason to suppose he will alter his method of proceedings, and act without instruments?—In what respect was David a man after God's own heart? In what respect did he fulfil all the pleasure of the Lord?—Was it not chiefly by his care for the honour, support and good order of the church, &c? Why did not God purge the land from idolatry, and set all things to rights in his church, without the instrumentality of King Josiah, if it was intended that his church should receive no aid, strength or stability from temporal rulers?

I observe what you say with respect to the methodists, and concur with you in opinion, with regard to the countenance given by them to ignorant and indiscreet men to be public preachers, &c. And to this I impute not a little of that contempt, which is cast on the institutions of religion at present. I believe Mr. Wesley to be a wise and good man, and think his plan of methodism well devised for the promotion of vital piety. But surely his preachers in Europe are not such lame hands, as those among us.—You think their profest adherence to the church *amazingly preposterous*

and disingenuous,—I have thought there were methodists sincerely attached to the church : but from some late movements, there is too much reason to call the sincerity of their profession of adherence into question*.—I shall never forget these movements.

You see I have written to you with great plainness, according to your own good example. I do not desire to unhinge, unsettle or render you uneasy in your present way ; no not for a moment.

My wife joins in christian respects to you and Mrs. M'Robert, &c.

I am your most affectionate brother,

D. JARRATT.

When I wrote this letter to Mr. M'Robert, I still thought there were some methodists sincerely attached to the church ; for they still continued to profess themselves to be so, and I could not be so censorious as to harbour a suspicion, that men, who made such high pretensions to religion, could be so disingenuous as to profess to be, what they in heart were not.—But it ap-

* What I refer to is Philip Gatch, &c. who undertook to be priests.

pears, from what has since happened, that Mr. M'Robert's judgment of them was more accurate than mine.—How to reconcile such palpable insincerity to christianity, I know not, nor shall I attempt it; and yet I cannot but hope that a number of them are good men, notwithstanding Mr. M'Robert, perhaps, very justly attributed their professed adherence to the church to nothing but policy—and I suppose, when that policy failed, they fell upon another, which they liked better: but if this policy was intended for the good of souls and the promotion of religion principally, might not some allowances be made for it, tho' candor seemed to be lacking? It really grieves me to be obliged to entertain any unfavourable sentiments of my fellow creatures, and especially those of a religious order: and therefore, notwithstanding the methodists have given great cause to suspect the sincerity of their professions on more occasions than one, I feel myself disposed to put the most favourable construction on all their movements, which the nature of things will bear. Mr. Asbury is certainly the most indefatigable man in his travels and variety of labours, of any I am acquainted with: and though his strong passion for superiority and thirst for domination may contribute

not a little to this, yet I hope, he is chiefly influenced by more laudable motives. However if I err in this, I have this satisfaction, that it is an error founded in charity.

I am your's most respectfully,

D. JARRATT.

LETTER V.



*Virginia, Bath Parish, Dinwiddie
County,*

THE REV. MR. JOHN COLEMAN,
IN MARYLAND.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

THE last winter and present spring have afforded me but little leisure ; my time has been employed in reading, writing and travelling. Old and afflicted as I am, I travelled more than one hundred miles last week, was at three funerals, each fourteen or fifteen miles from home—married two couple, one in Sussex, the other in Dinwiddie, at your uncle Stephen Williamson's : his eldest daughter was married to Littleberry Tucker, son of Benj. Tucker. I went also to preach at Rocky-run church in Amelia—and on Sunday last I preached and administered the sacrament at *Butterwood*. Within less than three months, I

think, I wrote about nine hundred pages in quarto. Part of these I copied for the press—part I extracted and abridged—and part I composed in prose and poetry.—But now, it is probable, I have well nigh finished my work—at least the work of writing, and preparing any thing for the press. Indeed, I have some cause to apprehend, that I may be shortly deprived of one of the greatest satisfactions of my life—I mean reading.—But the will of the *Lord* be done. With *his* blessing, life or death, prosperity or adversity will be gain to me.

In a former letter I made mention of a *tumor* on the side of my face, which had been there for months, without any appearance of coming to a head, and which affected the sight of my left eye. But about fifteen days ago *it* assumed a different appearance to what it ever had done before. In the middle of the tumor the flesh had been sunk in, from the beginning, and stuck fast to the cheek-bone. In this hollow place there arose something like a blister of blackish hue, about the size of a bean. My wife was much alarmed at seeing this, fearing it must be a cancer. However, in about two days, the blister broke, and, having discharged about two

or three drops of blood, it quite disappeared, without any pain or soreness. As soon as the blackish skin of the blister was removed, there appeared, in the midst of the sunken flesh, a small orifice, as if made with a lancet, or rather with the point of a pen-knife, which *orifice*, I suppose, reaches down to the bone. Out of *this* issued water, as clear as ever you saw come out of a spring, without the least disagreeable taste or smell; nor will it stain the cleanest linen any more than spring water.—I consider this discharge as an effort of nature to relieve itself and to throw off the morbid humour, and therefore, for the first time, applied a small plaister of salve to the orifice to keep it open and afford vent to let out the water. It continued to run about a table spoonfull in twenty-four hours, till *last Saturday*. From *that day* to this the discharge has been much more copious. I suppose that yesterday and to day there has ran a gill of clear water out of it. And yet the swelling round does not seem to lessen in any degree whatever. But, I thank God, the tumor is neither sore nor painful—or so little, as is not worth speaking about: but it affects my eye, by drawing down the under lid and exposing it to the wind and cold; this causes it to fill with

water, so that, many times, I can scarcely see to read or write. Some days the eye is more clear than others—and this being the case to day, I catch the favourable opportunity of writing once more to you, my son and dearest friend.

I have not applied to any of the faculty to have their opinion on the complaint. Some of my friends are apprehensive it may be a *cancer*; and it may terminate in *that*, for ought I know. And if so, it is not improbable but I may visit Philadelphia, and make application to Dr. Tate of that city. This indeed would be a long and distressing journey—but I should promise myself the satisfaction of seeing you by the way, and of taking Dr. Magaw by the hand before I die.—At present, I cannot think there are any symptoms of a cancer, according to *Buchan's* description of a cancer. He describes a cancer as a painful and very sore ulcer, and the ichor, issuing therefrom, abominably foetid and offensive—whereas the tumor on my face is neither sore nor painful, as already said, and the *water* issuing is as sweet, at least as free from any offensive smell, as that which is taken from the best spring.—Since the discharge of the water, I have felt myself more lively and vigorous in body than before; I can

walk and exercise with less fatigue than before, nor did I ever enjoy better health, for many years, than at present : and yesterday and to day I have read over and corrected the manuscript of hymns, which I mentioned, in a former letter. And I intend, God willing, to attend my churches and preach the gospel as long as I can crawl up into a pulpit. Though indeed the prospect of religion and the success of preaching are gloomy and discouraging.—But whether sinners will hear, or whether they will forbear, I wish to discharge my commission, and die in the field of battle.

My eye begins to fail me, at this time, and I must put a period to this letter. And not knowing whether I may ever be permitted to write to you again, I shall conclude with the words of Saint Paul to his son Timothy, 4th Chap, 2d Ep. 1, 8. “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom : preach the word, be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine ; but after their own lusts will they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn

away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.—But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.”

That grace, mercy, and peace from God the father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ may rest upon you and yours, in time and eternity, is the prayer of,

Dear, sir,

Your most affectionate friend,

And Brother in the bonds of the
Gospel,

D. JARRATT.

April 14, 1795.

LETTERS

ON VARIOUS AND INTERESTING SUBJECTS, IN WHICH ARE
INTERSPERSED MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE, ADDRESS-
ED TO THE REVEREND

MR. JOHN COLEMAN,

IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND.

LETTER I.

Virginia, January 20th, 1796.

MY REV. AND DEAR FRIEND,

I FIND, by your letters to me, that you have received my narrative and the several letters I wrote you in the course of last winter and spring; with which you profess to be both pleased and profited. It is my wish still to contribute to your profit and the profit of my fellow creatures in general. For this purpose I have written many letters, in the course of the last year, to different people, on a variety of religious subjects. I am now set down to continue my correspondence with you; and I mean to write you, as leisure and my in-

firmities will permit, a series of letters, this winter, on such subjects as may occur, and which may be judged interesting and worthy of your perusal. I cannot, at present, ascertain the precise time when I shall get a proper conveyance for these letters ; but, if not sooner, my intention is to send them by the same friend, who delivered you the former packet. His are safe hands, and I have ever found him attentive to, and punctual in, whatsoever I have committed to his care.

On Sunday last, I completed what is termed the grand climacterical year, and am now entered on my sixty fourth. It has been a maxim, pretty generally received by the antients, and not altogether exploded by moderns, that the sixty third year, or grand *climacteric*, is that year of a man's life, which is usually marked and distinguished by circumstances and events, peculiarly critical and unfavourable. But, on retracing the incidents of the last year, I am not able to recollect any thing more than common, (to wit) that same *goodness* and *mercy*, which have followed me all the days of my life ; and for *which* I desire to make the most unfeigned and grateful acknowledgments to that kind, bountiful, and indulgent parent, who has made my life his con-

stant care. I do not remember to have had a fever, head-ache, or any other pain, throughout all the year, except such as are usual to persons of my age. The *tumor* indeed, which I mentioned in a former letter, has continued, and does continue, in the same state. But *this*, as I think I told you, is rather troublesome than painful. It is not a cancer, nor any thing of the kind. Neither doctors nor surgeons know what it is. But this affords me no anxiety, as being satisfied that the Lord knows what it is, and for what intent it has been allotted me. I have no doubt but the allotment is kind and gracious, and my prayer is, that the design may be answered to all intents and purposes. To say I suffer no sort of inconvenience from the *tumor*, would be saying too much: it affects my eye, more or less, continually, and often to such a degree, as to oblige me to desist, for a while, from reading and writing—and at this moment I write with difficulty.—But why should a living man complain—especially one who sees himself, as I do, utterly unworthy of the least of all the Lord's mercies. In this place will I therefore set up my Ebenezer, and say, “Hither by rich grace I’m come.” If I am, in any measure, acquainted with the workings of

my own heart, my wish is to render unto the Lord according to the benefits done unto me: but here, dear sir, is the burden of my *worst complaint*—*I cannot do the things that I would*. Of this I daily complain. But in this it is some consolation, that I do not complain alone. I dare say, you have a complaint of the same kind: and I am ready to think, the most advanced christian upon earth feels enough of this, so as to enable, or qualify, him for sympathizing with you and me. I am aware, that some commentators, in order to favour a certain opinion, have found fault with our translation of Gal. 5. 17, and tell us that the word *cannot*, ought to be rendered *may not*. Whatever ingenuity there may be in such a criticism, I pretend not to say; but of this I am fully persuaded, that the experience of the most *perfect* man under heaven will inform him that our translation conveys a very great truth, and that he *cannot* do the things that *he would*. He *cannot* sing, and pray, and praise, as he would—he *cannot* read, and meditate on, the word of God, as he would—he cannot love, and rejoice in, God as he would—nor can he submit to, and acquiesce in, the disposals of divine providence as he would. In these and many other particulars he finds a mortifying in-

ability, and must confess with you and me, *that he cannot do the things that he would.*

Every true believer would, if he could, enjoy a delightful sense of a present God, in every prayer he makes. He considers prayer both as a duty and privilege: and as such he dares not neglect it. But, alas! how often does he find this duty a burdensome task, rather than a delight? he finds so much backwardness to this duty (especially in secret) and so little relish for the privilege, that he would be glad of some excuse for neglecting it; and he would neglect it many a time, if he was not urged on by conscience and his own necessity. And when he has performed the duty, perhaps the chief satisfaction he derives from it, is, that the task is finished. It is not always so; but it is so often enough to convince him, that he cannot do the things that he would. If he could, he would get near the Lord, morning, evening, and at noon, in prayer, and make this duty his constant pleasure and delight. But instead of this (to avail myself of an expression I have some where read) he is often dragged before God like a slave, and comes away like a thief. This is far from doing as he would.

The same observation may be made on his reading the scripture. The bible he esteems the best of books ; he believes it contains the words of eternal life, and is the infallible director to the attainment of everlasting happiness. In his judgment it is preferable to golden mines, and all the treasures of the earth. And yet how wide is the difference between his judgment and actual experience ? how often does he find a greater relish for reading a pamphlet, a newspaper, or almost any other book than the bible ? His taste is so vitiated, and his appetite for this heavenly food so little, that it requires no small degree of resolution to persist in reading a chapter or two every day. This is not doing as he would.

Another thing, the believer would do, if he could, is, to maintain the most exalted and affectionate thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to have the warmest sensations of love glowing at heart, in consideration of the unspeakable love of Christ to him, and the great things he has done and suffered for his salvation : he wishes to make him the delightful subject of his meditation, and the object of his most ardent affection from morning to night. But though he wills this, he cannot do it. A thousand trifling objects break in, and divert his

thoughts and attention from him, whom he has deliberately chosen for his portion, his rock, his only saviour, and whom he, in his judgment, esteems the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. Here again he comes far short of doing as he would.

Once more, the believer would calmly, submissively, and patiently acquiesce in all the dispensations of divine providence. He believes that God is love—and that he is loving to every man, and his tender mercies are over all his works—that he afflicts for our profit—that the very hairs of our head are all numbered—that all our afflictions, in number, weight, measure, and duration, are appointed by him who doth all things well, and hath promised that all things, in the course of his providence, shall work together for his good. Of these principles he has no doubt; and at times he is ready to think they will be sufficient to support him in every trial and affliction which may assail him in this life. But when an hour of trial and distress actually comes on, and he tries to avail himself of those principles, he finds he cannot do the thing that he would; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak: and hence he repines, complains,

and murmurs, as if he was hardly dealt with, and seems to wish the direction and controul of such matters had been in his own hands, that he might have disposed them better, or more to his own mind. Here the flesh lusteth against the spirit, so that he cannot do the thing that he would. I might enlarge the catalogue, but my weak eye will permit me only to subscribe myself

Your real friend,

D. JARRATT.

LETTER II.

January 28, 1796.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

IN the second paragraph of the preceding letter, I mentioned the uninterrupted state of my health, during the last year, and how little pain I had suffered from the tumor, which has been so long on the side of my face :—but in this I am constrained to give a very different account. Toward the evening of that day, on which the letter was dated, I felt an unusual degree of soreness take place between the tumor and the ear, which soon extended almost round the ear, and became much swelled, and was attended with much pain, so that I had little sleep or rest that night ; which was also the case for several nights afterward. The swelling was very hard and painful, and some applications were made use of to soften and alleviate ;—but to no purpose—applications rather irritated than relieved. I therefore desisted, and gave up all to the

divine disposal—to do with me as seemed him good.—The pain still continues, but is more moderate, so that I got some sleep the last night, and, to day, am permitted to write and read in some measure. The misery has generally been less intense during the hours of the day; but, with Job, I can truly say, “Wearisome nights are appointed to me. When I lie down, I say, when shall I arise and the night be gone? And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.” I thank God, I trust, I am preserved from uncreaturally murmurings and repinings—I have a degree of patience afforded me, so that, as yet my prayer has not been so much for the removal of the rod, as for the sanctified use of it. But I find I *cannot* avail myself of the precious promises and supports of the gospel as I *would*.—Some of my neighbours visit me in my afflictions—and, when they are with me, I am so far from wearying them with my complaints (which they cannot relieve) that I converse with them with a degree of chearfulness, so as to afford them as little pain on my account, as possible; and I often, for this purpose, put a smile on my face, when pain and anguish are sensibly felt in almost every part of my body. If this be hypocrisy—I hope

it is not of the criminal kind, as it proceeds from a wish to give no uneasiness to my kind friends, and to leave my complaints with God alone. When asked by any, "How do you do?" My general answer is, *I am tolerable*. Whatever idea they may affix to the word *tolerable*, my meaning is, that my complaints are not insupportable, but, by divine grace, I can bear up under them without fretting and repining to any great degree. It is still a precious article of my faith, that the Lord doth all things well—that afflictions are blessings in disguise—that he corrects for my profit—and, perhaps, among other benefits intended me, this may be one, that is, to wean me more and more from a world in which I am becoming less and less qualified to be of service.—I have not been at church, but once, since Christmas, occasioned chiefly by rainy days—otherwise I should have gone, for, notwithstanding any indisposition from the *tumor*, I have the free use of my limbs and my tongue—and, perhaps, my lungs are as good and sound, at this day, as ever they were. I wish to go to church, every Sunday at least, and join in her most excellent system of public worship: a system to which I am

peculiarly attached, because it is noble, beautiful, complete in all its parts, and, in my judgment, well calculated to answer the end designed.—And will such a system ever be permitted to fall wholly to the ground? I fondly hope that it will not. Though, alas! the prospect here, in Virginia, is gloomy and truly suspicious and discouraging.—Churches are little attended—perhaps, in most places (I judge from report) not more than a dozen one Sunday with another; and sometimes about half that number. This indeed is shocking, alarming, and distressing on many considerations,—as it goes to manifest, not only the low and still declining state of the Church, but also the little regard the people have for the public worship of their Maker and Preserver, and for the salvation of their own souls.—It is true, ministers, as I hear, are ordained from time to time, by our bishop: but I am not so happy as to hear that any of these are, in reality, gospel ministers—you know what I mean.—I am told also that the vestries, in different parishes, are still receiving ministers to officiate in their churches: but they are such ministers as the people will neither hear nor pay; consequently the whole burden must fall on the hands of the vestries, which

they are not able to sustain. The consequence follows, that if the minister is not an independent man, he must be driven to seek new quarters, almost every year. Among others, we have a recent instance of this, in a case of Dr. Cameron, whom you saw at my house, three or four years ago, in habit of a *visitor*. He then lived at Petersburg. But, induced by necessity, having a large and increasing family, he removed into the parish above me, called Nottoway, where the vestry obligated themselves to pay him one hundred pounds per year, for three years successively. But the vestry meeting with no assistance from any one of the people, the whole fell upon themselves alone: this burden they found too weighty, and caused them, no doubt, to wish to get rid of the incumbent—which, I am told, they have effected, and Dr. Cameron is now minister of a parish in Lunenburg county. Few or none of the people would go to hear him (at least very seldom) and very few of the vestry made a constant practice of going to church, as I have been informed, so that, frequently, his congregation would not exceed five or six hearers. Surely this was enough to weary him out, and make him think of new quarters. In a word, the prospect of

of the church's prosperity becomes more and more forbidding from year to year.

Nor do I find the aspect of religious affairs much more encouraging in other societies, or denominations. There is an awful falling off on every hand.—True, they have larger congregations, on Sundays, than our ministers have: and, in their public assemblies, they may frequently return thanks to heaven for their religious liberty and equality, privileges &c.—but I fear they are so far from making good use of these blessings, and duly availing themselves of their privileges, that many will have an accumulated account to render for misimprovement. By a letter from a pious Presbyterian minister, I learn that religion is at a low ebb among them. The baptists, I suppose, are equally declining. I seldom hear any thing about them. The Methodists are splitting and falling to pieces—their religion seems to consist too much in party distinction, modes, rules, and usages of their own devising; and, indeed, most of the preachers they send out, and which I sometimes hear, appear to be so weak and unqualified for their business, I have less and less hope of any lasting or substantial good being done by their means.

I have heard of the fall and destruction of Cokesbury: but as I am not a prophet, nor a prophet's son, I will not tell you what I said to the little doctor, when he first opened to me his design of building that great house. However, like *Micaiah*, I gave him no mighty encouragement—nor have matters there turned out much better than I expected. When men, like those on *Shinar's* plain, have determined to build, that they might get themselves *a name*, the Lord has frequently blasted the design. However I was sorry when I heard of the catastrophe: I felt for Mr. Asbury—though I never expected any great things, or good purposes, would result from the erection of that vast pile. Indeed, I see not, how any considerate man could expect any great things from a seminary of learning, while under the supreme direction and controul of tinkers and taylors, weavers, shoemakers and country mechanics of all kinds—or, in other words, of men illiterate and wholly unacquainted with colleges and their contents.

See what a vast round I have taken, since I first set out from the *tumor*—but when writing to you, I would not study correctness, but just set down such thoughts as

occur in a miscellaneous manner. The more artless a letter to a friend is, the more pleasing and acceptable it is.—I have now wrote, till I hardly see the letters I am making—and herefore hasten to a close.

I remain, as always, your real

And affectionate Friend,

D. JARRATT.

LETTER III.

Virginia, Feb. 17, 1796

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

IN December last, I purchased a tract of land, in this county (Dinwiddie) containing, by survey, six hundred and thirty nine three-fourth acres, for which I paid Col. Jones, (the late proprietor) nine hundred and sixty eight pounds. Though I was obliged to borrow a very considerable part of the money. I am therefore, for once, a good deal in debt; a situation, in which I feel very awkward, because so new and unusual: for before this purchase, I did not owe five shillings in the world, except about thirty shillings to my blacksmith. There is a good dwelling house on the premises and a number of other houses; though none of any great account except two barns. It lies between the glebe, where I now live, and Nottoway river, about six or seven miles from

this place, and within about two miles of Nottoway river. Should life and health permit, I mean to remove to it some time in the spring. I shall then be about seven miles from Sappony, eight miles from Butterwood, and fifteen or sixteen miles from Hatcher's run church;—the last of which, through age and infirmities, I suppose I shall not visit as often as usual. I have little encouragement, you may be sure, to visit either of the three: for although we have, as yet, tolerable congregations, when the weather is good, and especially at Butterwood, where is generally the greatest audience, yet the word seems to have no effect. The people have set under the sound of it so long, that they appear gospel hardened, and proof against every motive and consideration that can be urged or enforced. However, when I consider that salvation belongeth unto God—that the conversion of sinners is a work of his power alone—that when he shall deign to take the work into his hand, the stoutest hearts must bend—that he does this work by the instrumentality of a preached gospel, and, that in the mean time that I am not accountable for the success of my own labours, I am still induced to hold on in calling sinners to repentance. Another thing which

induces me to go to the churches, in this parish, is, because they are most convenient to me; and because I love to go to church. But when I go, and see, almost, the whole congregation, in the churchyard, before the service, all engaged on worldly topics, or in trifling conversation—when I see them come in with such an air of indifference and irreverence—when I discover so little appearance of any design of joining me, heartily and sincerely, in the sacred exercises of the sanctuary—it tends to cool my zeal and spoil my own devotion—so that I seldom return from church, but with a heavy heart.

I know not how it may be in other *states*, but I consider the situation of a gospel minister, in this *state*, to be very forbidding and distressing. I have found it so, indeed, and still find it so, in an increasing degree: so that if duty and necessity laid not on me to preach the gospel—if a desire to please God and promote the best interests of mankind, did not compel, I see nothing that could induce me to hold the office, any longer. I am not induced by the prospect of any temporal emolument, or reward—for I have no reason to expect this—but the contrary. I have no sub-

scription in my favour, nor do I ask any. And yet, would you think it? It is pretended, I have a very *itching palm*. And so critical is my situation, that though I am now in debt, I cannot ask for monies, which have been due to me, for many years, in order to do justice to my creditors, but it is made a pretext to confirm the popular cry—that money is all and all with me. To shew how unfounded and unkind, such insinuations and assertions were, I lately wrote a letter to a gentleman in the county on the subject, and which, by the by, was the first letter I ever deigned to write on the subject at all, though the cry had been so loud and so long continued. In that letter, I appeal to my general conduct and to matters of fact: the substance of which letter may be to this effect: I wished him to consider on what basis the charge was founded: that I thought, if a judgment was formed from circumstances and matters of fact, a more groundless charge could not be conceived. And then, in an appeal to my manner of life, I ask, whether any man ever heard me complain of the measure, when the republican assembly took away my living, in the year 1776, by an *expost facto* law, and a stroke of power; and thereby subjected

me to the caprice of the multitude? When other clergymen were chagrined at this law, and quit their post, their charge, and their parishes—I asked—did I do so, or did I slack in my diligence on that account? Did I desert my post, or leave my parish? Did I not as constantly and zealously preach in the several churches in the parish as before, though till the latter end of the year 1785, I never had a scrip or subscription in my favour, nor did I ask for any such thing? Here I appealed to himself as a witness, not only to the constancy of my attendance at the churches, but that I refused, on no occasion, to turn out by night and by day, and preach in private chapels and private houses, and in the highways and hedges, for the benefit of the people: and I called upon him to point out, if he could, a single person, who, from the year 1776 to 1786, ever gave me a six-pence for these services; or any one, of whom I had asked any money for them. When a subscription was set on foot, in 1785 and 1786, I asked him, if this was done by any solicitation from me? And when about sixty or seventy people had subscribed, and the collection of the money was put into his hand, whether he did not meet with so little encouragement in the business, that,

through despair, he gave up all further attempts, after having collected thirty or forty shillings for a whole year? I asked him, if he heard me complain of this fruitless attempt, or, whether I betrayed any uneasiness on the occasion? I acknowledged I got a few perquisites for marrying, but these fees were just what the married person chose to give, and hence, they were, according to fancy, sometimes more, sometimes less, and sometimes nothing. I then mentioned several instances, in his own family and connections, when after I had rode to marry, I returned as light as I went. Upon the whole, I concluded, that no impartial and unprejudiced person, could fairly judge, from the above statement (most or all of which he knew to be true) that there was any thing in my whole conduct, which betrayed a thirst for gold. In speaking thus in my own favor, and appealing to my own conduct in this manner, I may be thought, with *St. Paul*, to have become a fool in glorying—but, with him, I was compelled. And in the whole recital I had *his* example in view; especially, in his appeal to the elders of Ephesus. “You know, says he, from the first day I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all times, &c. &c.”

And I can also say with him, on the same occasion, these hands (of mine) have ministered to my necessities, and those with me, for near twenty years.

But, sir, I never expected (if found faithful) to escape persecution from envenomed tongues, at least, and I thank God, I believe few men have cared less for the slanders and reproaches of malevolence than I have—and therefore, as I said, it was the first time I ever troubled any man, in the county, with a letter on the subject. That you and myself may be accounted worthy to suffer persecution for Christ's sake, is the prayer of

Your sincere friend,

D. JARRATT.

P. S. The Methodists, I believe, have let me alone for some time, and, I trust, at present, we are on pretty friendly terms.

LETTER IV.

February 22d, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

THE complaint I mentioned in my letter of the 28th of January, still continues, though, through the tender mercies of God, I am favoured with some intervals, when the pain in my jaw is nearly or quite removed, but the weakness of the eye continues the same. This is the case at present—I have little or no pain, but it is with much difficulty I see to write. But thanks to heaven, I can see a little; and as I hate to be idle, I have begun another letter to you. What the contents may be, I cannot now tell, as I am an extempory writer, frequently begin without any premeditation, or any particular subject in view: I shall therefore set down any thing that may occur to my mind, as I go along, and in the order in which it shall occur, without any

regard to method, or the studied rules of correctness.

And while I think of it, I must inform you, that I was (though in much pain) at your brother Williamson's on Thursday last, (the 18th instant) in order to celebrate the nuptial rites of his second daughter, Elizabeth. She is now married to one Mr. James Easom, of Halifax county, in Virginia. He appears to be a decent, well behaved young man, and of considerable information. I hope they will do well. Here I saw your fond mother, and your name, according to custom, being mentioned, I told her I had began writing some letters to you. On which she intreated me to make mention of her to you, (in her name) in the strongest and tenderest terms of maternal affection; and relate something of her situation. She lives still at the old place, and has a plenty to live upon. Mrs. Williamson, relict of your uncle John, lives with her. But your mother is greatly afflicted with a complaint in both her eyes, which has continued a long time, and still continues with little alteration. My infirmity teaches me to sympathize with her most sincerely.—But I seldom see her, as she is much confined, as well as myself. It is truly alarming, and distressing (at

least it is so to me) to see how fashionable the neglect of public worship has become in this state ; and especially among those who are vulgarly called the *better sort*, and the poison of whose bad example is generally the most diffusive and pernicious. I have been at church the three last Sundays ; and though I was not free from bodily pain, yet the prospect afforded me a pain much greater. I cease not to pray for the prosperity of Christ's church in general, and especially that our church, as we say, may meet with the smiles of heaven, and be raised from her low, her sinking state, shake herself from the dust, and become a praise in the earth. But mine are poor prayers—so weak, so cold and freezing, that I fear they reach not half way to the throne. I wish that those, who can pray with more ardor, would never cease, day nor night, to ply a throne of grace till the Lord shall return and have mercy upon Zion—comfort her waste palaces—repair her ruins—and cause her desolate places to bud and blossom as the rose.

You will judge from hints in this and my other letters, that I am become a great recluse indeed ; and this is the case in reality. I spend my time in much retirement—I seldom, in day time, come out of my

study—except at breakfast and dinner, when I dispatch my frugal meal in a very little time, and withdraw. The continual trouble and uneasiness resulting from my eye, render it disagreeable to be in company. I never visit at all. In truth I never admired visiting—or going any where from home, unless called upon by business or duty. I have formerly visited a neighbour with a view to his spiritual benefit. But whether from my own backwardness, ignorance, discouragement, or from some peculiar arrangement of circumstances, the end designed has been neglected—nothing, or very little, has been said or done to edification—so that I have returned burdened, rather than pleased and recreated.

However, I should be glad to see you, and a few others who are not too ceremonious and punctilious. You would let me sit in company as long as my eye would permit, and put the best construction on my absence when painful necessity required me to withdraw. And I would engage, on my part, to be as much in your company, as I possibly could with any satisfaction to you or myself, and in the mean while, you should hear no groan nor complaint from me to make you uneasy.

I will now conclude this letter, as it is rather on a dull and unpleasing subject, and in future, write no more on maladies and complaints—for why should a living man complain? especially one who wishes to chuse the Lord for his portion, and repose himself and all his concerns for time and eternity on the care and fidelity of the great shepherd of Israel. To him I desire to look, and on him depend, to provide and carve for me, as seemeth him good, to guide, direct, protect and support me—to be my help in trouble, and my shield in danger—the rock of my salvation and exceeding great reward. This is the chief solace of your

Friend, &c.

D. JARRATT.

LETTER V.

February 24, 1796.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I UNDERSTOOD there was to be a general convention of our church last fall, at Philadelphía ; but whether there was, or not, I have never been able to learn ; of consequence, I have neither seen, nor heard of any thing that was done, in case that there was a convention. Dr. Magaw, in a letter, informed me, a convention was expected, and, probably a revision of the articles would make a part of the business. I have had some anxiety on this head, and should be glad to know whether there has been any revision of the articles of our church, and also to get a sight of the articles so revised.

I have had my fears, that, as our church has been distinguished by the loose lives and ungodly practices of her professed members, so will she be distinguished,

shortly, by proportionable corruptions in doctrine. Indeed, most of the clergy, as far as I can learn, have preached, for a long time, what is little better than deism, notwithstanding our old articles were so pointed and clear on the peculiar doctrines of the christian religion: such as the Trinity—the Godhead or Divinity of the Redeemer—the incarnation of the son of God—the atonement made by his death, &c. But should *Unitarianism*, *Socinianism*, &c. once creep into *the articles*, and give a sanction to that useless kind of preaching, so long in vogue, we may anticipate worse times than ever we have yet seen. I say, *the articles*, for should any thing derogatory to the Divinity of the son of God—any thing to insinuate even a doubt respecting his incarnation, atoning sacrifice, and the merits of his blood and righteousness be introduced, I should not call such *our articles*, but would reject and renounce them in the most decided terms and public manner.

You have heard, no doubt, of that wonderful democrat—that fire-brand in church and state, *Dr. Priestly*. You have heard of his *unitarian* principles, and of the sham answer he has written to a book, called the *Age of Reason*, said to be the offspring of that poor, unfortunate, disap-

pointed statesman, Thomas Paine, which he begat in a state of durance, and sent abroad in order to please *Robespierre*, *Brisot*, and other atheistical leaders of the then reigning faction in France, and hereby release his neck from the perpetual terrors of the guillotine, and procure his enlargement. Whoever reads *Priestley's* answer to hapless *Paine's* libel against his Maker, will be at no loss to decide, that his intention was to betray the cause, which he pretended to defend. And yet such is the *eclat* attending *Priestley's* name, that it is to be feared he will have too much influence in poisoning principles both religious and political. I have also seen another pamphlet against the *Age of Reason*, as is pretended, written by one *Wakefield*. But I verily believe *Wakefield* was in reality, a greater deist than *Paine*. If *Paine* was in fact a deist, and if his real sentiments are expressed in his *Age of Reason*, he must have been but a young convert, for we find very different sentiments recorded in his books, called *Common Sense*, and the *Rights of Man*, the latter of which was published but a short time before he took his flight into France. The only real answer to *Paine*, which I have read, is written by *Elhanan Winchester*.

This is an answer indeed ; it is sensible, decent, plain, convincing, and directly in point ; as he effectually wipes off and does away the ridicule and false misrepresentations, (which Paine had wantonly and prophanelly lavished on the scriptures) by quotations from the scriptures themselves : so that whosoever reads this answer, with an unprejudiced mind, must be convinced on which side the truth lies, not by vague and fine-spun arguments, but by ocular demonstration : and, at the same time, must be induced to hug the Bible still closer to his heart, not only on account of its inimitable beauties and Godlike sublimities, but especially on account of the native tendency of its doctrines and precepts to enlighten, instruct, and diffuse universal happiness among all orders of mankind.

The *unitarian* Doctor Priestly, has had a very masterly answer, by one *Mr. Gowan* ; but I have not seen it. But the plainest, and best adapted performance, I have read, for establishing christians in the sublime doctrine of *God manifested in the flesh*, or the divinity of our adorable Redeemer, was written by the reverend *Sinclare Kelburn* of Ireland. The book contains five sermons on that interesting subject, preached and published originally at *Belfast* in

Ireland, but lately reprinted in Philadelphia, with a recommendatory preface by the reverend John B. Smith. If you have not read it, I could wish you may read it, as I think you would be pleased and edified thereby.

Arians, Socinians, and *Unitarians*, in their mad attempts to support an hypothesis, greatly obscure the principal and distinguishing glory of the gospel, and sap the foundation of a poor sinner's comfort. For my part, I find I stand in need of an Almighty Saviour—an Almighty Helper—an Almighty Physician—an Almighty Shepherd. If I am one of his people, and of the sheep of his pasture, then I am an individual of a very numerous flock—a flock wide diffused and scattered on a thousand hills throughout the habitable world: And if my shepherd be not possessed of attributes unlimited and incommunicably divine, I should fear being overlooked amidst the multiplicity of objects and concerns which must engage his attention. But if Jesus, my shepherd, be the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Jehovah, as David's shepherd was, then my fears depart—suspicious glooms disperse, and cheerful hopes of safety and protection dawn and revive. I see in my

shepherd every perfection requisite for the office he sustains, and every qualification necessary to enable him to take care of such needy, oppressed, frail creatures as we are. He is perfectly acquainted with every individual of his flock—he is intimately near them—his eye is upon them, and his ear is open to the prayers of all, equally as to the prayer of any particular one ; his arm supports, leads, guides, and protects them at all times, in all ages, and in all places : their thoughts, their wants, their weaknesses, and complaints are all known to him ; he is all-wise and all-mighty, and therefore he is able to penetrate the most secret devices and hidden machinations of their enemies, controul the infernal powers, and take the wise in their own craftiness : the government is upon his shoulders, and the administration of universal providence, over all nations, families, and persons, throughout the universe, is in his hand, and he can so effectually restrain, controul, and manage in every case and circumstance, as to cause all things to work together for the good of those, who have put themselves under his pastoral care, and trust him with their all. “ He feeds his flock, as their shep-

herd, he carries the lambs in his arms, and gently leads those, that are with young."

Such, my friend, is our shepherd—and could I be induced to suppose, for a moment, that he is not possessed of every attribute of divinity, supreme, and incommunicable, my hopes would sink, my heart faint, and my soul despair. But the very nature of his office requires that he should be possessed of these divine perfections, and the holy scriptures assure us that he is possessed of them. And are we indeed under the care, management, and protection of such a shepherd? Can we, through grace, say, we are his people and the sheep of his pasture? Then, surely, we have as good a right as David, to say, *we shall lack nothing*—nothing essential to our supreme, and final God.—Like sheep, *ye* we are weak and prone to wander; but he restores the soul, reclaims from crooked ways, and leads in paths of righteousness for his *name's sake*. And what is his name, here referred to, but, the Lord, the *shepherd*? This is a name of office, which he will not forget; but in every punctilio, act in character, as the tenderest, the kindest, the best, and the most vigilant and careful shepherd. O how safe, and happy are his

people! I am a poor, weak, wandering, and stupid creature; I know it—I feel it: I am oppressed, defenceless in myself, and surrounded with enemies and ravenous beasts of prey. You, I doubt not, are in the same predicament. Yet, why should we fear, seeing all is made up in the fullness, power, wisdom, faithfulness, care, and compassion of our divine shepherd. My trust is, that he will provide for us, heal, restore, protect, and guide us by his counsel, and, in spite of the combined powers of earth and hell, lead us safe to glory. Then shall we see him as he is, be transformed into his likeness, be seated near him, and dwell in his presence for ever.

Ah! My dear sir, what a glorious, heart-reviving subject is this? I trust, you find it so, and are ambitious to serve and please your shepherd while you live, and thus testify your gratitude for the innumerable and unspeakable obligations you are under for his goodness and mercy. I also, wish to love him more and serve him better: but, alas! What unsuitable, what languid returns do I make? I cannot do the things that I would. I feel what I say—I complain of it, I am ashamed of it, and mourn on the account of it. But I

look forward to a period, not far remote, when I shall love him in some measure as I ought, and now wish—sing his praise in louder strains, and serve him with all the vigor and ardor, “Of the rapt seraph that adores and burns.” This is the hope and trust of

Your sincere friend,

D. JARRATT.

LETTER VI.

March 1, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

SINCE writing my last, I have seen a letter from Mrs. Hall of *Philadelphia*, addressed to Mr. G—g, in which your name is mentioned, and by which I learn you were in *that city*, last autumn, and, as I suppose, in the capacity of a deligate to the general assembly or convention, of our church, I am anxious to know what was done upon the occasion, and what sentiments appeared among you, and therefore I wish you to procure a very large sheet of crown paper, and write it out closely and fully on the subjects of debate and the conclusion. You may send this, per post, to Petersburg and I will gladly take it up. I have no great expectation of getting any information, on this head, from any quarter, in Virginia, as I never had much correspondence with any of the clergy—in

this state, and for two or three years past, less than ever.

I was at church the last Sunday, and, as the weather was moderate, had a pretty good congregation, as times go. I preached on the blessedness attainable, in this life, by all who truly receive the gospel. I felt considerable liberty in speaking, and, as I conceited, treated the subject with an unusual degree of perspicuity, in a word; I thought I had, in a measure, done justice to it. But what was the effect? I speak not now of others, but of myself. I know, well enough, what effect it ought to have upon me when I am enabled, at any time, to discharge any of the duties of my office with a degree of propriety: it surely ought to make me humble and thankful, considering that every good gift is from the Lord, and *of myself I can do nothing—no, not even think a good thought.* But, my dear sir, what a riddle—what contradiction, are we to ourselves! So great a sense have I of my ignorance, unworthiness, unprofitableness, and a thousand deficiencies cleaving to my best performances, that I know I ought to blush at the most distant thought of human commendation, or a desire of praise from men—but such is my remaining infirmity, I find I cannot wholly

suppress it—I found a strong attack from this quarter last Sunday, which much disquieted me, on my return from church; and though I struggled against it, and endeavored to look to God for help in that time of need—yet I am convinced the *old man* is not dead. Lord, what is man!—Surely, in his best estate, he is altogether vanity. How forcibly do these painful experiences teach me how frail I am, and how defiled in every part—and, by necessary consequence, point out, in the clearest manner, the excellency of the gospel, and of that full and free salvation, which is therein revealed. How does it endear to my soul the Lord Jesus Christ, and shew me what a suitable Saviour he is? I know, I feel the necessity of his perfect righteousness to justify me in the sight of a holy, sin-hating God, and that he must be my all for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. When a sense of remaining infirmities and imperfections has this effect, to take us more and more out of ourselves, and all self-sufficiency, and to drive us near to Christ, and a more simple and entire dependance on him alone for every thing, then, I believe, it has the effect the Lord intends by permitting such inward evils to remain with his people in the

present state of probation. Most gladly, therefore, would I glory in my weaknesses, if thereby the power of Christ may more eminently rest upon me.

I know the Lord hates sin of every kind and degree, and, I trust, he hath brought me to hate it also ; and I have a thousand times prayed, in my poor manner, for the total destruction of it, and that I never might feel pride, self-love, and vain-glory any more. But after all, I do feel these evils remaining, and therefore seek my consolation in the answer given to the apostle, “ My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness.” In the mean while, a sense of our imperfections need not break our peace, or weaken our confidence in God, while the desires of the heart are upright, and we are conscious of no allowed guile.

With great respect, I hasten to subscribe myself

Your sincere friend, &c.

D. JARRATT.

LETTER VII.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

IN my last letter I gave you but a mortifying and gloomy picture of christian experience, yet I might have enlarged the portrait and been more lavish of shades, and yet have drawn the picture nearer to the life. Ah! My dear sir, what is it we put our hands unto, that is not, more or less, contaminated by the touch of our fingers. What dead flies are to the ointment of the apothecary, such are pride, self-vain thoughts, &c. to our most splendid services, or performances: they infect and spoil all we do. Where is the place so sacred as to exempt us from the intrusion of these flies? Neither the study, the closet, the pulpit, nor even the Lord's table, can hinder their access. But I consider the present, to be our militant, state, and these are the enemies we have to contend with; and the Lord permits them to continue in the land for the exercise of the several

christian graces, wherewith he endows, or furnishes his people, and enjoins them to use for wise purposes. *Slay them not, lest my people forget.* We may infer from the love God bears to his saints, as well as from his hatred to sin, that if he could not, or would not, overrule these things for good, he would immediately put an end to their existence, and his people would see war no more, in the world, or, know what these inward conflicts mean.—But, blessed be the Lord, we are not under the law, but under grace; and therefore, though sin wars and fights, it shall not conquer and reign: nor does it at all affect the safety of our state, while we wrestle and strive against its remains; and though it affords us disquietude within, yet it shall not separate us from the love of God, who has taught us to hate sin in every shape and degree—to mourn over involuntary failings, and to loath even the garment spotted with the flesh. He knows that we have a desire (for that desire he himself bestowed) to love him more and serve him better: he knows we are grieved at our short comings and great deficiencies—and yet he suffers us to struggle on—but he does not leave us to contend alone; no, his arms are un-

derneath us, his watchful eye is upon us, and he says to the enemy, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He will not suffer us to be tempted, or tried, beyond what he will give ability to bear, and he will graciously provide for our escape. Happy is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is :—worm Jacob, if called out to the contest, shall thresh the mountains, the most gigantic foes. Of ourselves we are incompetent to the smallest trials or difficulties—but, trusting in the Lord, we may surmount the greatest. The Lord is our keeper, and defender—or we should have been borne down long ago : and he will keep us, in the midst of all storms, dangers, and conflicts, even to the end. His wisdom and power, his faithfulness and love, are all engaged for the safety and protection of his weak, depraved, and helpless people. And by how much the more sensibly we feel our depravity and insufficiency, by so much the more are we led to admire and adore his wisdom in defeating the machinations of satan—his power in upholding such weaklings, as we are, against all opposition—his faithfulness and love in not leaving us a prey to our

enemies, and in multiplying his pardoning mercy, from day to day.

The gospel scheme excludes all boasting, and the weaknesses and imperfections we continually experience in ourselves and in all we do, teach us, in the most, I may say in the only effectual manner, to accede to this scheme, and to boast only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and give all the glory of our salvation to him alone. It is easy to say, by rote, we are saved by grace, not of ourselves, but Christ is all in all—but this lesson, though short, is never savingly learned, but by sensible experience; and did not experience continually repeat it to us, we should be apt to forget it again, to our great loss and damage.

But, you are ready to say, “I feel the evils you speak of—I have repeated proofs of my weakness and great imperfections—of my ingratitude and insensibility, &c.—They are a plague and a sore burden to me—but is there no way to get clear of, or at least to remedy, these evils while here in the body?” True the gospel affords many great and precious promises, that by these we may be partakers of the divine nature; and we are exhorted to grow in grace and to improve in holiness and maturity in the new man: and moreover, we are encourag-

ed to look for and expect a growing improvement in every christian grace. And if we diligently use the means appointed for this end, we shall not fail of success—we shall most assuredly receive increasing measures of light, strength, knowledge and love, and all other things essential to our establishment and maturity in grace, and ripeness for glory in the celestial world.—But I do not suppose that by growing in grace we shall acquire a better opinion of ourselves than we have now, but the reverse. I believe, the more spiritual light and discernment we gain, the more sensible we shall be of our own insufficiency and imperfections, and the turpitude of our best actions. We are to grow in grace and *the knowledge of Christ*: and, in my judgment, we grow in the knowledge of Christ in proportion to the knowledge we have of our need of him; and this knowledge of our need of him is in just proportion to the sight and sense we have of our own weakness, wretchedness, depravity, and total helplessness. So that was I to describe what growth in grace is, in a few words, I should say, it is to have lower thoughts of ourselves, and higher thoughts of Christ. To trust less to our own righteousness and strength, and to rely more on

him for both. That we may thus grow in grace and the knowledge of Christ, so as to walk more humbly under a sense of our own weakness and depravity, and rely on him more entirely, is the prayer of

Your constant friend,

D. JARRATT.

March 5th, 1796.

Virginia, May 19th, 1795.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR brother Williamson was kind enough to send your letter of the 28th ult. to me, the last evening, which I read, and was thereby informed of the state of your family and yourself. Among other matters, you tell your brother you hoped to have had a letter from me, before the date of your's, &c. I am always fond to embrace every opportunity of writing—but take it once for all, you may rest assured that, whether I write often, seldom, or not at all, my attachment to you is always the same, and, I believe, ever will be so; on the other hand, however pleasing your letters are to me, yet, though I should not be favored with one as often as I could wish, for my own sake, I will attribute your silence to the distance, want of proper means of conveyance, or any other cause, rather than to any alteration of your former affection and esteem. However before this reaches you, I expect you will have such a packet from me, in your hands,

as will fully evince that I am not unmindful of you, and will spur you on to send me the letter, which, as you tell your brother, you intend writing to me.

The account you give of the favorable reception my printed sermons meet with in Maryland, is very agreeable to me, and am glad you have been able to put so great a number of copies into circulation. You join me in fervent prayers to the Father of Mercies to make them a real and extensive *blessing*—which, as my Lord and Master knoweth, is the only reward I seek or expect for my trouble in writing them. Their meeting the approbation of many readers affords me hope that they will be useful, as I am satisfied there is nothing in their style and manner calculated to flatter mankind, or to please the ear of the delicate, and gratify the taste of the curious; and consequently, if they are accounted valuable by any, it must be for the sake of the plain and unadorned, but important truths they contain.—Jesus Christ, the author of eternal salvation, is the center and *sum total* of all my writing and preaching: He is *all in all*: and when he is the delightful theme, and the glorious object in contemplation, I cannot confine myself to the cold rules of studied composition, lest, by so doing,

something of that *ardor* should be abated, *which* the contemplation of such an object is calculated to inspire.—I fear neither books nor preaching have much influence on the minds of the people of Virginia, at present. Books are little studied or attended to; I mean *good books*: Infidelity is much sought after, by multitudes, as the last resort to still the honest remonstrances of conscience, and to help them to sin on securely; and books of this stamp are bought, borrowed, and read with great avidity: they suit the *taste* of the times, *which* delights most in a *black inspiration*. What a blessing is it, that God has engaged to take care of his own church, so that “No weapon formed against *her* shall prosper.” On this I rely, and can treat with just contempt all the machinations of satan and his accomplices. The church is built upon the Rock of Ages, and the gates of hell shall not prevail.

With my usual esteem and affection to you and your's, I hasten to subscribe myself

Your Friend and Brother in Christ,

D. JARRATT.

Virginia, October 24, 1795.

(ON AFFLICTION.)

My ever Dear Friend.

IT has so happened that your last letters to me (of July 6, and September 4.) were enclosed in letters to your brother Williamson, so as he happened to be at my house on the very days on which they were received ; I have therefore had an opportunity of reading not only your letter to me, but also that which was written and addressed to him, by the partner of your affliction. The contents are truly affecting. I sincerely sympathize with you both—and wish to comfort you — But what shall I say ? Topics of consolation are not wanting — they abound in the *blessed word*. But I find, from yours that these are so familiar to your mind, that, should I write a volume, I could suggest nothing but what you already know. — My prayer is that the Lord may apply them to your hearts by his spirit, and then will they be consolatory indeed. — I cannot comfort you — but Jesus

can—and will in his own good time;—be therefore encouraged to hope and expect a happy issue.

I have often preached on the subject of afflictions—but as yours arise from a source with which I cannot be so well acquainted as many others, what I say on this occasion, may seem rather like speaking by rote, than from a real *fellow feeling*. However I think I have been in circumstances so nearly resembling yours (especially when my favorite nephew died) that I hope you will discover nothing of the *stoic* in what I write.—It would be disingenuous and impertinent in me to advise you to forget or even suspend the feelings, which such a repeated stroke must excite in a tender parent's breast. Sensibility is not a crime, especially in cases where it is impossible not to feel, and where the most indulgent of all parents intended we should feel; for unless we feel our trials, how can we exercise a becoming submission under them? Your grief must be great—and I join you in thanks to the Lord in preserving you from a *murmuring spirit*: and, I trust, amidst all the pleadings of flesh and blood, you still found, and will still continue to find, something within you, which aims to say, without reserve or exception,

“Not my will but thine be done.” That is a sweet portion of scripture, Heb. 12, 5, 11. It is so plain in itself, and so suitable to you that no comment will be necessary. You will here observe, that he who knows our frame is pleased to allow that afflictions, for the present, are not joyous but grievous : but here is a consideration which may afford some support under them, that they are well intended, and that those who are exercised thereby, shall come out of the furnace refined, more humble, more spiritual, more fruitfull in righteousness. The part assigned the people of God, in affliction, is pointed out by St. James—*let them pray*. It is our part and duty to pray for help in time of need, and to endeavor to turn our thoughts to that fountain of consolation, and thence derive such considerations as have a suitable tendency to alleviate our griefs and sorrows. The will of God concerning you and your’s has been manifested by the late events—and all you can do, is to look to him for strength to sustain, and grace to be still and know that he is God ; that he has a right to dispose of us and our’s as he pleases, and that in the exercise of this right he is certainly good and wise. I hope the Lord, the only comforter has brought, and will still bring,

such thoughts with warmth and efficacy to your mind, as may be most seasonable ; and, though your wound may be still painful, yet faith and prayer will not only support you now, but accelerate the blessed end. There is something in grief not easily accounted for—it seems bewitching: it is painful in itself, and yet we seem loth to part with it ; yea, we are prone to indulge it, and to brood over such thoughts and circumstances, which are most likely to increase and prolong it. And why is it thus, unless the Lord when he afflicts, intends or designs not only that we should grieve, but also that our grief should prove medicinal, and terminate with the blessing intended by it ? The Lord employs afflictions for his people's good : and many advantages are derived from them ; so that, perhaps, we could not well do without them.

First. Afflictions tend to quicken us in prayer. It is a pity it should be so ; but experience testifies that a course of prosperity and ease, has an unhappy tendency to make us cold and formal, especially in our secret devotions. But when troubles rouse the spirit, we are constrained to call upon the Lord in good earnest, for we feel a need

of that help, which none but God can supply.

Second. They tend to keep alive a conviction that all sublunary bliss is vain and unsatisfying—that here we have no abiding place of rest, and therefore our thoughts should fly upwards where true joys and permanent treasures are. The children of Israel would have laughed at Moses, or treated his invitation of going with him to the land of promise with coolness and, perhaps contempt, had they not been, at that time, sorely galled with the cruel yoke of uncommon oppression. Thus the Lord, by withering our gourds, and breaking our cisterns, weakens our attachments to the present world, and renders the thought of leaving it less painful, and more welcome. This you seem sensible of when you say, two ties, &c. are broken.

My paper reminds me of drawing to a conclusion—in which I have only to say sincerely that

I am your real Friend,

D. JARRATT.

Providence, February 16, 1797.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I SAW your brother and family last Saturday—he told me you had read Watson's Apology with pleasure and profit.—It is indeed no easy matter to estimate the value of that little book—take it by and large, and it exceeds any controversial writing I ever saw. Could any man of any discription, divest himself of prejudice, only for three or four hours, and read, with attention and understanding, those few pages containing the Apology, and, I think, infidelity must be eradicated from his mind. By the favor of my friends I have been possessed of three copies of that work, and I am endeavoring to put them about in such a manner, as may answer some good purposes. True, a mere speculative belief of the Bible will not of itself save any man, but as long as such a belief is retained there is the greater probability that the principles of the Bible will sooner or later operate with force—whereas, when infidelity has taken place and infused its

poisonous effects—the case looks very hopeless—though not beyond the reach of divine grace: and as the Almighty usually works by means which most aptly apply to the accomplishing the end—I have hopes that Watson's Apology will, in many instances, answer the salutary purposes, both of preventing the spread of infidelity, and of reclaiming infidels.

With our best respects to you and your's,
I hasten to subscribe myself,

Your affectionate Friend,

D. JARRATT.

FINIS.

THOUGHTS
ON SOME
IMPORTANT SUBJECTS
IN
DIVINITY;
IN
A SERIES OF LETTERS
TO A FRIEND.



BY THE REV. DEVEREUX JARRATT,
Rector of Bath Parish, in Dinwiddie County, Virginia.

Baltimore :
PRINTED BY WARNER & HANNA.

1806.

RC

TO THE READER.

THE following letters, being written at the request and intended merely for the satisfaction of a friend, were not intended for publication. Indeed they contain nothing new ; for the same sentiments may be seen in the writings of many authors, who have treated on these subjects. If they have any thing to recommend them, it is the plain, simple and concise manner, in which the thoughts, are expressed. What has filled volumes, is here held forth in so small a compass, that all the leading truths, and most important doctrines of the gospel, may be seen in one view. I know not that any thing is omitted, which is necessary for a christian, or even a preacher to know, relative to the distinguishing principles of christianity, and the scheme of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Some may fear that the first four letters savour too much of Calvinism, and tend to Antinomianism. But if the reader will suspend his judgment, till he read the last letter, he will see that all his fears were groundless. That letter, in perfect consistence with all the former, guards the doctrines of grace from abuse, and tears up Antinomianism by the roots.—That God may render them a blessing, to all who read them, is the prayer of

D. JARRATT,

Bath, Sept. 3, 1791.

LETTER I.

(ON JUSTIFICATION.) *

Bath, June 3, 1790.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

INDUCED by your request, I take up my pen to write my thoughts on some of those important points, which were the subject of our conversation, at our last interview.

I am sensible there can be no greater pleasure to a humane, humble and inquisitive mind, than to communicate and receive truth: and more especially such truths, as concern the present comfort, and future happiness of immortal souls.

I am aware that the bounds of one letter would be too limited, or narrow, to illustrate the several essential doctrines,

* *Let it be observed, that by justification in this letter, and also in the three letters following, I mean justification from all the charges of the law or covenant of works.*

on which we conversed, and on which you wished to have my thoughts, in writing. I find myself, therefore, obliged, in order to do all the justice I can, to the several particulars, to treat of them distinctly, in a series of letters, as my time and opportunity will permit.

In this first letter, I intend to treat of the justification of a sinner, before God, and shew what is implied in it.

Undoubtedly, it would have appeared more methodical, if I had first treated of the fall and ruin of mankind. But as the whole doctrine of justification stands upon that ground (the fall of man,) for the sake of brevity, I have chosen to treat of both, in one and the same letter, and at one and the same time.

Man when he first came out of the forming hand of his Creator, was perfect and upright, as being created in the pure and holy image of God. In this state he was, when God gave him a perfect law to keep, suitable to his nature. This law, which is also called the Covenant of Works, required perfect obedience, on pain of death. But man, being in honor, continued not. He broke this law of God, and incurred the threatened penalty. Accordingly the penalty was executed upon him. For his

soul died, immediately, a spiritual death, by being separated from God ; and his body, became mortal, and hasted to die a natural death. So that death then seized both on soul and body, and rendered him liable, every moment, to death eternal.— And as all mankind were contained in him, (that is Adam,) as the common parent, and representative of us all ; so through his offence, sin, death, judgment and condemnation, came upon the whole human race. And this is the ground, as I said, upon which the whole doctrine of justification is founded. We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God : we stand exposed to the curse of the broken law, in its full extent ; and also to the strokes of incensed justice. We are all become bankrupts, and have nothing to pay, or give as a ransom for our souls. In a word, we are become weak and helpless, and unable now to keep the law ; or to make any attonement for the least sin.

But here it is to be remembered, that though man had sinned, and rendered himself helpless, as well as guilty ; yet, as we did not, thereby, cease to be God's creatures, nor he to be our Lord ; so he did not destroy his own law, nor discharge us from our obligation of perfect obedience

to it.—In this hopeless situation we lay, when the Lord, in mercy, provided a law of grace for our recovery, from misery and ruin; and laid help upon one, who is mighty to save. God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. He tasted death for every man: and God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses. And now, according to the gracious constitution of the gospel, whosoever believeth in him, is justified from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of works. To conclude, all in a word; as Christ lived and died for us, and, as our substitute, has magnified the law and made it honourable, by his obedience, and died to satisfy justice, by paying the debt of suffering, God may now be just and the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

Having said thus much, in order to shew the ground, on which the doctrine of justification is founded, I shall now proceed to shew what is implied in being justified, or what is meant by justification.

Some suppose that to be *pardoned* and *justified* is one and the same thing: and that nothing more is implied in justification, than a mere pardon of sin. But I can

by no means subscribe to that opinion. That pardon of sin is included in the justification of a sinner, I allow : but, that this is all which is included in it, I must deny. Justification undoubtedly implies much more than a mere pardon. Every person knows, that in common language, to be *justified* and *pardoned* are two very different things. And why then should we confound them here, in the present case? True it is, that, in the day of a sinner's conversion to God, pardon and justification are happily united ; but still pardon is not the whole of what is implied in being justified. The idea, which I have of justification, shall be expressed in the following words. " When God justifies a sinner, he not only pardons all his sins, past and present ; but he also receives him into his love and favor ; accounts him righteous, and gives him a title to heaven."—This is my definition of that term, and it is both brief and plain ; and I doubt not, but it will stand the test, both of reason and scripture. And that you may notice the definition more particularly, I have marked it with commas.

I expect to have occasion of adverting to several things mentioned in this letter, when I come to treat of the righteousness, by which we are justified, and the faith,

through which we are interested in that righteousness. At which time, I flatter myself, you will clearly discover the propriety of what I have here advanced. I hope that I shall be able to elucidate the matter, in so plain a manner, as may be satisfactory to your mind.

For the present, I conclude,

Your sincere friend, &c.

D. JARRATT.



LETTER II.

*Of the RIGHTEOUSNESS by which SINNERS
are JUSTIFIED.*

Bath, June 10, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

IN my last, I briefly shewed what I understood by justification, and what it is to be justified, in a gospel sense. In this letter I am to speak of that righteousness, by which we are to be justified. And that I

may be sure to speak accurately and steer clear of error, in a matter of such great importance, I shall have an immediate recourse to the fountain of truth, the Bible.

In the apostolic writings, we may observe such expressions as these, to wit, “ Being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” Rom. x. 3.—and in the third chapter of the same epistle, 21st and 22d verses, we meet with the same expression: “ The righteousness of God,” &c.—and in the fifth chapter of St. Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians, and last verse, we have these very plain, very decisive, and very comfortable words; “ For he was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” I might mention other places, where the same expression occurs, but these are sufficient.

Now it is beyond all doubt, or controversy, that, whatever this righteousness may be, it is the only righteousness for the sake of which a sinner can be justified; or on account of which our sins are pardoned, our persons accepted, our souls restored to the favor of God, and intitled to heaven. It is indeed our only justifying righte-

ousness ; and it is called the righteousness of God, in contra-distinction to the righteousness of man. Man's righteousness, in his highest attainments, is still scanty and imperfect : but *this* is completely perfect and God-like, equal to all the law can demand in its utmost strictness and spirituality.

Nor is it, I think, hard to determine what this righteousness consists in, if we humbly seek to the inspired writings for information. It is sometimes called the righteousness of God ; and sometimes the *righteousness of Christ*. It is so called, 2d Peter i. 1. " To them who have obtained like precious faith *in* the righteousness of God our Saviour, Jesus Christ." And what the righteousness of Christ consists in, you may discover by reading Rom. v. 19. " By the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." By the obedience *of one*, that is, *of Christ*, as may be seen in the context. Here the righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified, or the means by which we are made righteous, is said to consist in his obedience. Now we all know that obedience consists in the observance of a law : consequently the obedience of Christ, by which many are made righteous, or just, consists in his per-

fect observance, or compliance, with all the precepts of God's law, for us, as our substitute.—Again he is said to be, “The end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.” Rom. x. 4.—And in “Gal. iv. 4. God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” These and such like scriptures, point out the personal, or active righteousness of Christ; and shew that his obedience was not for himself, but for us, in the capacity of a surety and substitute. For if he did not pay the debt of obedience to the law of God for us; if he did not do this as our substitute, we might, with as much propriety, expect to be made righteous by the obedience of *Gabriel*, as by the obedience of Christ.

But this is not all that the righteousness of Christ consists in, or comprizes. His sufferings and death constitute a principal part of it. We read of being *justified by his blood*;—of being *reconciled to God by his death*;—and of his *tasting death for every man*. From these scriptures, we learn, that he endured the curse, and suffered the penalty of the law for us, as well as obeyed the precept. In doing both these, he became a complete Saviour, answering our

debt of duty to the preceptive, and paying our debt of punishment to the penal part of the law of works.—I say the preceptive and penal: for you must know, that on the fall of man and the breach of the covenant of works, we became subject to a double debt; a debt of duty and a debt of punishment. And both of these must be paid, before God could be just and the justifier of the believing soul.

I would further observe, that this righteousness is also called “The righteousness of God, without the law, and an imputed righteousness, without works.” I mention this to shew, that this righteousness, by which we are justified, is not only a quite different thing from our obedience, or good works; but that we are pardoned and accepted of God, neither in whole, nor in part, by any thing we can do, to merit or deserve the same: and therefore our justification is to be attributed wholly, entirely and exclusively, to the sole merits of Christ’s obedience and sufferings.

The sum of what I have written on this point, is, that the righteousness of God, or Christ, is the sole meritorious cause of our justification. That this righteousness consists in the obedience and sufferings of Christ; or his active and passive obedience.

He, for us, fulfilled the law, and endured the penalty. I say, he did all this, not for himself, but wholly for us, as our surety and substitute.—This is a matter of the greatest importance. It is one of the most distinguishing excellencies of the christian religion. It is the article with which the church stands or falls. Take this away, and you destroy the whole gospel, and sap the foundation of all our hope, in time and eternity. It ought, therefore, to be carefully studied, rightly understood, and closely and invariably adhered to.

I am your Friend, &c.

D. JARRATT.



LETTER III.

*Of that FAITH, by which we are JUSTIFIED,
and the PLACE it has in JUSTIFICATION.*

June 19, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

GREAT things are spoken of the righteousness of God, in the Bible, and

ment of our justification through him. I say, Christ for its object. For the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Saviour, who lived and died for sinners, is the peculiar object of a justifying faith. Hence it is that we find faith so frequently defined, in the new testament, by *believing in Christ—trusting in Christ—coming to him*, &c. And the righteousness, by which we are justified is called *the righteousness of faith—the righteousness which is of God, by faith—and the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*. Or, as Dr. Doddridge renders the words, “The righteousness of God, by faith, is revealed to faith.”

Now from these scriptures, just mentioned, and others which might be adduced, it appears that a justifying faith comprehends these two particulars. first, A believing, with the heart, the truth of the gospel, and particularly the truth of that method of salvation, through Christ, which the gospel reveals. And secondly, A hearty compliance with that method; and a full consent to, and hearty approbation of that method of salvation. *With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness.*

First, justifying faith comprehends a believing, with the heart, the truth of the gospel, and particularly the truth of the

method of salvation, through Christ, which the gospel reveals.

The common acceptation of the word faith, is, that it is the belief of a thing, upon the word, or testimony of another. Thus it is that we have faith; or belief, in such and such things, transacted during the late war; because they have been transmitted to us, by credible human testimony. In like manner, I believe, or have faith in, the record given concerning Christ, and the plan of salvation through him, in the gospel, upon the testimony of God. The former is called human, and the latter divine faith. So we find that faith is said to be, “a receiving the witness, which God hath testified of his son.” And, on the other hand, unbelief is said to be, “a not believing the record, which God hath given of his son.” Now this is bringing the matter from the fountain of intelligence; whence all useful, saving knowledge and truth are derived: and not launching out into the regions of fancy, or flying on the wings of a sportive imagination. We have the word of God for it, that a divine faith is the belief of a thing on the testimony of God; and particularly the testimony, which he hath given us of his son, in the gospel. And what that testimony is, you may see

first John v. 11. “This is the record, or testimony, that God hath given to us eternal life ; and this life is in his son.” This is the sum and substance of that gracious and important *testimony*, the belief of which is faith. The obvious meaning of *which* is this : “That it hath pleased God, in compassion to our fallen race, to constitute and reveal a method of bestowing immortal life and happiness upon lost, helpless and guilty creatures, lying in the region and shadow of death, and exposed to everlasting misery. And he further testifies, that *this life is in his son* : that it is only through his son Jesus Christ, that this life and happiness can be had. It is altogether through him, that they can be hoped for : and nothing but death and destruction appear from every other quarter.”—Now, what is faith, but a hearty, full and affecting belief and persuasion of the truth of this record, on the credit of God, who has given us this testimony ?

I have already observed, in my first letter, and the same is implied in this testimony, that the whole scheme of redemption, through Christ, is founded on the fallen and ruined state of man.—It clearly supposes that we are all sinners, exposed to the wrath of God, and unable to help ourselves,

by any thing we can either do, or suffer. In the same scheme, the Lord Jesus is represented, as substituting himself in the place of sinners, fulfilling the law, which they had broken, and bearing the wrath of God, due to *sin*. It also represents the offended Sovereign as willing to be reconciled to his guilty creatures, on account of what his Son has done and suffered for them.—But then, in order to be made partakers of the benefits, procured by the Saviour, faith is required on our part. That is, we are required, as helpless and guilty creatures, to renounce all trust in ourselves, and place our whole dependence on the righteousness of our Redeemer, making this the only ground of our justification. Therefore all those, who are the subjects of a saving faith, are so fully persuaded of the truth of God's testimony, respecting life and salvation, through his son, that they can venture their eternal *all* upon the truth of it. They are heartily convinced, that Christ is the only Saviour; and that his righteousness is alone sufficient, to the utter exclusion of every other righteousness, in point of justification,

But the full persuasion of the truth of this testimony, that there is life in the son of God, is not enough. For,

Secondly. There must be a hearty compliance with that method of salvation, by a free consent to, and approbation of, the plan of life, through the righteousness of Christ.

To believe, with a general and customary faith, that the gospel is true, is not that faith, which is saving; and on which the actual possession of the benefits of Christ's death and passion are suspended.—We must heartily approve of this way of salvation—we must willingly and delightfully cast ourselves and the everlasting interests of our souls upon this righteousness—we must choose it as all our salvation, and the ground of all our hopes of acceptance with God; and cheerfully receive Christ Jesus the Lord, as our prophet to teach and guide; our priest to atone, and our king to rule and govern. In short, there must be a cheerful consent to all the terms of the gospel without the least reserve. I say, there must be a cheerful reception of, and reliance on Christ, in all his offices, and a hearty consent to all the terms of the gospel. For though necessity first moves a soul to seek after Christ in earnest: because none will do this, till they are well convinced of their own lost and helpless state, and that they must perish for ever, without an in-

terest in the righteousness of Christ : yet, when it pleases God, in answer to the prayers and cries of convinced sinners, to shine into their hearts, and give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, then they venture their souls on his all-sufficiency, with great freedom, cheerfulness and delight. It is indeed one of the freest and most delightful acts of their whole lives. And now, being justified by faith, they have peace with God, and peace in their own souls, by trusting in the righteousness of Christ alone, in the manner described. Having shewn what saving faith is, I come now to shew what place faith has in our justification.

And after what has been said, you will not be inclined to make faith, in any measure, the meritorious cause of our justification. No ;—you will give this honor to Christ alone, and be content to assign faith some humbler station. What that station or place is, which faith has in the justification of a sinner, I shall shew, or point out, in a few words.

Observe then, that as the righteousness of Christ is the sole and exclusive meritorious cause of our justification, so the grace

of faith has a peculiar reference to that righteousness; and as an instrument receives and relies thereon; and thus makes an application of it to the soul. All sound divines agree, that there can be no true and saving faith, which has not the righteousness of Christ for its object.—A justifying faith fixes and rests on this alone, and finds satisfaction; because it was in this alone, that God found the satisfaction of his law and justice.—There are many other things, indeed, inculcated and enjoined, in the New Testament, besides faith. Such as repentance, love, justice, charity, &c. But you will observe, that we are never said to be justified by repentance, love, justice, or charity. The reason is, because none of these graces terminate on a proper object.—Sin is the object of repentance;—the glory and goodness of God, is the object of love; and justice and charity respect our fellow-creatures. But as none of these objects are the peculiar grounds of our justification, consequently, none of those graces, which terminate on them, can have any concurrence or instrumentality in it. But the righteousness of Christ, through which alone God can be just and the justifier of a believing soul, being the immediate object of faith: therefore faith has a pe-

culiar concurrence and instrumentality, in our justification. Faith, as I intimated, fixes on, lays hold of, and applies to us that perfect righteousness, with which the Lord is well pleased, and by which the law is magnified and made honourable.

I would now conclude, by bringing all I have said in this long letter, into so small a compass, that the whole may be seen at one view.—The whole of faith may be comprehended in three words, *Approbation*, *Trust* and *Consent*. Whoever heartily approves of the Saviour, shall be saved by him; he that trusts in his righteousness, shall be justified by it; and he that consents to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, shall inherit all its blessings. This *Approbation*, this *Trust*, this *Consent*, is Faith.

I flatter myself, that, by this time, you see what Faith is, and the place it holds in justification—as also, what is meant by the righteousness of Faith; and why Christ's righteousness is called the righteousness of Faith: namely, because it is Faith's object; and by Faith it is relied on, received, applied and made ours, by *imputation*, according to the wise and gracious constitution of the Covenant of Grace.

I have laboured to be plain; I pray that you and I may both know and experience

what the true Faith is, and enjoy the comfort and benefit of it, in time and eternity.

Yours, &c.

D. JARRATT.



LETTER IV.

*Shewing that the RIGHTEOUSNESS of CHRIST
is the only one by which a SINNER can be
JUSTIFIED.*

June 30, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

IN the preceding letters, I have endeavored to shew, what is meant by justification ; what by the righteousness of Christ ; what by a justifying faith, and what place it has in justification. What I intend now, is, to evince that there is no other righteousness, by which sinners can be justified, consistent with the justice of God, the honor of his law, and the rights of the divine government, but *that* which

the gospel reveals, and which I treated of in my second letter.

People may talk what they will about excluding the *active obedience* of Christ from having any share in our justification, as if Christ kept the law of God, not for us, but for himself, I look upon this to be one of the grossest, most capital, and pernicious errors, that ever was broached in the christian church. Such an opinion betrays very great ignorance, both of ourselves and the holy law of God. I say, it betrays very great ignorance, both of ourselves and the holy law of God. It would, indeed, be no wonder to hear an ignorant, blind, self-flattering sinner talk largely in favor of moral virtue, and extenuate the evil of sin, or make a thousand excuses for it: because such an one sees neither the evil of sin, nor the strictness and spirituality of God's law. But certainly we would not expect to hear such language from any man, who is awakened from his natural state of stupor, and has his eyes opened to behold the odious and destructive nature and evil of sin; and in any good measure sees the broad extent of the divine law, and the severity of eternal justice. I am verily persuaded that there is no man possessed of

the knowledge of these things, if he would only place himself before the bar of God ; and in the presence of his judge, but what would be convinced, that no righteousness, which is not absolutely perfect and compleat will be sufficient to justify him, in the sight of a holy God, and answer all the charges and demands of the immutable law, so as to claim his acquittance from punishment and a title to the kingdom of heaven. Whoever shall place himself in this situation, will stand in need of no laboured arguments to convince him, that he must have a righteousness, that can answer the precept, as well as the penalty of the law of works ; or he must be condemned.

I have thought it might be one reason, why some well-meaning men are so dark and confused, in their ideas respecting this matter, that they do not consider, that there is a wide difference between a person's being justified and merely pardoned. To be pardoned and justified, in common language, are very far from being synonymous terms. When a man is pardoned, it supposes that he is guilty of breaking the law, and really deserves punishment for his crimes. But the judge dispenses with law and remits the just penalty. But when a man is justified, the case is quite different.

For it supposes that the man has not broken the law, but has lived so uprightly, that the law has no charge or claim against him. This man is therefore justified, because he is innocent, and stands right in the eye of the law. You see how widely these things differ. And yet, in the present case, they are united ; so that we are said to be pardoned and justified at one and the same time.—But the reason of this unusual language is plain enough. For sinners have all broken the law of God, nor have they any righteousness of their own, to answer its demands, or screen them from the penalty. Therefore if any sinner is exempted from punishment, it must be an act of free favor and pardoning mercy. But then, be pleased to observe, that he is not pardoned and received into the favor of God, till he believes ; according to the requisition of the Covenant of Grace. By his faith, he is invested with an interest, in the all-perfect righteousness of Christ. God *imputes* this righteousness to him, or accounts it his, as though it were his own : and he may plead it, in his own defence, against all charges of the law of works ; as if it had been his own act and deed. And for this very good reason, because the

obedience and sufferings of Christ, were not for himself, but for mankind, as their surety and substitute. Now, this righteousness, in which the true believer is interested, by his faith, being perfect and without flaw, is equal to all the law of works required, by its precepts, and justice demanded, by way of penalty. Consequently the man, who by faith is possessed of it, must stand right in the eye of the law, and is legally and justly acquitted.

But as no righteousness can possibly clear us from all charges and demands of law and justice, but one that is perfect, and every way commensurate to whatever the law of God requires, it clearly follows, that there is no righteousness, but that which the gospel reveals, sufficient for the justification of a sinner. This is evident, because as you have seen already the gospel does reveal a perfect righteousness, but you will find nothing of this, in any other writings whatever. The most renowned sages of pagan antiquity knew nothing at all of any such perfect righteousness. And I do not suppose that any man living will venture to say he has such an one of his own.—O what cause have we then to bless and praise the Lord, who has laid

help upon one that is mighty to save.—
“ We have all sinned and come short of the glory of God : and by the deeds of the law, can no man be justified.”—“ Bless, then, the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name ; and forget not these inestimable benefits. For he hath so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.”—“ God hath set forth his Son to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, or manifest his justice, for, or in the remission of sins ; that God may be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.” What a glorious and God-like scheme of salvation is this !—A scheme, by which the greatest, as well as the least sinner, may be fully justified, and saved from wrath, in a way perfectly consistent with the honor and dignity of all the divine attributes of the Almighty Jehovah. For, in this scheme, “ Mercy and truth have met together ; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”

That you and I may ever esteem this glorious righteousness, and be found in it,

fully absolved and completely justified, is
the prayer of,

Dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

D. JARRATT.



LETTER V.

*Of JUSTIFICATION in the DAY of JUDGE-
MENT.*

July 10, 1790.

DEAR SIR,

WE live in an age, wherein religious disputes have greatly abounded. Calvinism had pretty quietly kept the field, among the more zealous professors of religion, for a considerable time; and seems to have met with little or no opposition, from the beginning of the present century, to the year 1733, or thereabout. Not that the Cavinistic doctrines were universally believed by all sorts of people, especially

the members of the church of England; but, as far as I can gather, the clergy and lay-members of that church, were either tired with controversies, or had so far degenerated in doctrine, practice and zeal, that they concerned themselves very little about religious affairs, any farther than the mere name and form. However, I trust, there were some good men among them. But those who made the greatest profession, and appeared more zealous for doctrines, &c. were Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists. And these were generally, if not wholly, Calvinists. But from the year above mentioned, or about that time, and downward to the present day, Mr. Wesley and his adherents, openly, opposed the doctrines of Calvin. Hence great disputes ensued, attended with, perhaps, too much heat and misguided zeal, on both sides. However, a little before the death of Mr. Whitefield, who was of the Calvinist party, the storm, in some measure subsided. Something like a calm succeeded, and love and forbearance returned, and smiled upon the religious societies, throughout the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. It was at this time, Mr. Charles Wesley addressed

Mr. Whitefield, in a very kind and loving epistle, which begins with these lines—

Come on, my Whitefield, since the war is past,
And friends, at first, are friends again at last—

But, alas! these halcyon days were of too short continuance. The disputes were again revived, and carried on, with more vigor and animosity than ever.—*Shirley, Hill, Toplady, &c.* soon blew the trump of war; and *Sellon, Fletcher, Wesley, &c.* came forward to the engagement. The flames of war, then kindled, have never ceased to burn to the present day. They are continually blown up and kept alive, by the belligerent powers, not only in Europe, but in the states of America. The general assembly of the kirk to the north, have employed a Mr. Annon, &c. to elucidate and defend the decrees, *in the Confession of Faith*, that “God, from all eternity, has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass,” in time. And the *Arminian Magazine* is bursting, with all its thunder and combustibles of various kinds, in full opposition. While pulpits, rostrums and stages are lending a hand, on either side, to crush and destroy their opponents.—What wonder then, if, in this din and smoke of war, the truth should suffer a dismal eclipse.

It has been the fate of religious disputes, seldom to terminate in an amicable manner. I never knew them bring the contending parties to be of one mind; but often to drive them to a greater distance from each other; and into opposite extremes. Smaller errors, instead of being totally annihilated, grow and swell to an enormous size, in the heat of controversy. Hence it so often comes to pass, in the contention between the *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, that one side is driven into barefaced *Antinomianism*, and the other into *Legalism* or *Pharisaism*. There is more danger, than is generally suspected, that while men are eagerly contending to avoid the fatal rocks of the former, they may, before they are aware, be set fast on the pernicious shoals of the latter.—He is a good pilot, that can steer an even course between both: especially, at a time, when the boisterous waves and storms of violent disputation are high and strong.

I doubt not, but this is a principal reason, why some zealous, good men have been almost driven into a very dangerous extreme, respecting the *righteousness of Christ*. I have not heard of any, as yet, who have gone so far, as to deny that

Christ *died for us* : but, alas ! Have not some gone much too far, in denying, that he lived for us. They allow that he was our substitute, as to penal sufferings ; but they think he fulfilled the law, not for us, but for himself. This is certainly a first rate error. Nothing could have driven a considerate reader of the Bible into it, but his just abhorrence of Antinomianism, and an eager desire to steer clear of it.

But, my dear Sir, if we will keep ourselves cool and dispassionate, and stand aloof from the tents of strife and contention, we may easily avoid this, without giving up that most essential and important truth, that, “by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous ;” and thus sap the very foundation of the gospel. This is the point I shall endeavor to clear up, in this letter. And I may, perhaps, be the better qualified for this task, as I have kept myself, as much as possible, out of all dispute and contention on either side. I have only been a looker-on ; and have observed, that many times, the debate has been more about words, and mistaking of terms, than any thing else. Though this is not always the case ; for certainly there is a great difference between

Calvinism and Arminianism, though they agree in all things essential to salvation.

The title of this letter, you will observe, is, Of justification in the day of judgment.—In the day of a sinner's conversion, we must all allow, that he is justified by faith only, without the deeds of the law; and his acceptance is wholly in the beloved. But when the sacred writers speak of the day of judgment and of justification, then it appears that the sentence will turn upon something else.—St. Paul, ii. Cor. v. 9, 10, speaking of that awful day, says, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. As I lately preached a sermon on these words, I shall just give you the substance of what I then delivered. So that this letter may also be called a sermon.

From the words (I observed) we may learn the following particulars.

First. That there will be a judgement. Second. That Christ will preside, as Judge. Thirdly. That the whole human race must appear there, and be judged according to what they have done *in their own bodies*. Fourthly. That they will be acquitted or

condemned accordingly. And Lastly. That this trial, and consequent sentence, will be according to that law, or dispensation, under which every man lived, in his state of probation. The heathens, who have not the written law, as we have, will be judged by the law of nature. But we, who live under the gospel dispensation, must be judged, by the revealed will of God, in the scriptures. For the sake of brevity, I pass over several of the particulars, contained in the text, and only treat of the two last, which concern the trial and decisive sentence of the judge. As we have no business with the heathens, I shall leave them in the hands of God, and proceed to speak of the trial of those, who live under the gospel dispensation.—And what law is it, by which they will be tried ; and on what will the sentence of life or death then turn ?

In order to illustrate this matter, we shall observe, that before man fell, God gave him a law suitable to the perfection of his nature.—And when we fell and turned from God, and corrupted our nature ; as we did not cease to be his creatures, nor he to be our Lord and Master, so God did not destroy his own law, nor discharge us from our obligation to obey the law, as

perfectly as ever. But seeing, after the law was broken, we stood condemned by it, and could not possibly be justified by it, because we had already transgressed it; God was pleased, of his infinite goodness and mercy, to make a new Covenant, or Law of Grace, in which a remedy was provided, whereby we might be saved from the curse and threatened punishment of the old Covenant, or Law of Works.—We shall therefore be tried, at the bar of God, upon both these Laws; but ultimately and more particularly on the Law of Grace.

The Law of Works demanded perfect obedience, and threatened death for the least failure, or disobedience. But the Law of Grace finding us under guilt and condemnation, for the breach of the Law of Works, enjoins us to repent and believe in Christ, the surety of the new Covenant, and promises to pardon all our sins, upon the condition of repentance and faith, and also to give us a title to heaven. And if we persevere in faith and new, sincere obedience, which is the fruit of faith, we shall be put in possession of eternal life and glory.—So that in the judgment, though it will be first evinced that we are sinners, and have deserved death, by the Law of Works,

yet the trial will not end here. For as another remedying law has been provided, the next inquiry will be, whether we have accepted of that remedy and complied with the conditions of that law, on which pardon and salvation were offered. And on this inquiry our life or death will then depend. This will be the turning point. The wicked and impenitent will, indeed, stand condemned, by both these laws. But it is only by the Law of Grace, that the holy believer will then be justified and adjudged to immortal life and glory.

To illustrate this matter, as clearly as I am able, I shall point out the cause to be inquired into, and to be decided at that great day : and also shew what accusations will be brought in, against mankind ; and what defences may be made against the accusations.

Suppose we then, that the judgement is now set, the books are opened, and all mankind are standing at the bar. The trial is begun, and the first indictment or accusation is read, in the hearing of the prisoners at the tribunal. And this is the substance of the accusation :—“ That they had all sinned, and had broken that holy and just law of God, which requires perfect obedience, on pain of death.” And there-

fore, for the breach of that law, the prisoners deserved to die according to its righteous sentence: “Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the law. The soul that sinneth shall die.”

—Here is the accusation, founded on the Law of Works. Now if no defence can be made, this one accusation will cast and condemn the whole human race. *For all have sinned, and every mouth is stopped, and the whole world stands guilty before God.* How then are the prisoners to escape?—What plea can they offer?—What defence can they make?—Why, they are all obliged to plead guilty to this, and confess that the charge is just. And then they may put in this plea, namely—“That the Lord Jesus Christ, hath substituted himself in the place of fallen mankind, and has made satisfaction, by tasting death for every man, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness, equal to all the demands of the law:—that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them:—that Jesus Christ has borne all their sins, in his own body, on the cross. And seeing he did and suffered all this as a surety for them, or in their stead, therefore they ought not to die.”—The substance of this plea will not be con-

tested, on the part of the accuser. But then, it may and will be observed, “ That though the Lord Jesus has done all this ; yet according to the tenor of that Covenant, or Law of Grace, made in consequence of the mediation of Christ, none were to receive pardon and the other benefits of the Redeemer’s death and passion, but only such as would comply with certain conditions, on which the blessings and benefits thereof were suspended. Which conditions were repentance, faith, and a return to God through Christ, and a sincere and persevering obedience to the gospel, in time to come.”

Here then, we see there is room for the bringing in another accusation, and a very weighty one it is, founded on the Law of Grace. It may now be alleged, by the Accuser, “ That they did not perform the conditions, on which the blessings of the new Covenant were offered and promised : that they lived in unbelief, impenitence and rebellion against God : and therefore have no right to claim a pardon, or exemption from punishment. So far from it, that by the sentence of the gospel, they are exposed to greater damnation. For this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than

light:—he that believeth not shall be damned: and except ye repent ye shall all perish.” This then is the accusation, founded on the Law of Grace. And if any, at that decisive day, are justly charged with the non-performance of the conditions of the Covenant of Grace;—if they have lived and died in final impenitency, unbelief and rebellion; then no further defence can be made. Condemnation must inevitably follow; and the prison of hell is the place of their everlasting abode,

But should any be falsely accused of such non-performance;—what are they to do?—Are they now to plead guilty? By no means. They must deny the charge; and produce their own personal righteousness, as an evidence, to refute it. I say, *their own personal righteousness*: for it is evident, that no other will answer the purpose. Christ never undertook to repent and believe for them. It is therefore, their own faith and repentance, sincere obedience and perseverance, which they must produce; and by these alone they are to make it evident, that they did fulfil the conditions of the new Law or Covenant of Grace, and so are interested in all its benefits.—If they can produce these, then are they evangelically righteous in themselves, and stand justified, by this evangelical righteous-

ness of their own, and are acquitted hereby, not from the charge of the Law of Works, but from the accusations founded on the Law of Grace.—They are acquitted, because they are able to shew, that they have actually performed the conditions of faith, repentance, &c.—And as this also proves that they are interested in the merits of Christ's obedience and death, they are also justified from all the charges of the first Covenant or Law of Works, by virtue of a legal righteousness, in Christ.

Thus you see, that though we must be justified, not only in the day of conversion, but also, in the day of judgement, only by the righteousness of Christ *imputed*, against all accusations of the broken Law of Works, yet we can neither be justified nor acquitted from any accusation of the Law of Grace, but by our own faith, &c. which constitutes our evangelical righteousness. For these are the conditions, on which the benefits of the new Covenant are suspended. Upon the whole, I trust I have made it evident, that though the righteousness of Christ is the only thing, that can justify a sinner from the demands of the Law of Works, yet it is the last question, which will decide the doom of mankind, in the day of judgment, namely,

whether they have performed the conditions of the gospel. If they have, they are judged to life and happiness; but if not, then they are sentenced to everlasting misery.

For proof, that this is the true state of the case, I would refer you to Mathew xxv. 34th verse and downwards. There you will see a particular account of the process of the final judgment. The inquiry is, whether mankind have done such and such good works, as will manifest the truth and reality of genuine faith and love. And in John's gospel, 5th chap. and 29th verse, it is written, "They that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation."—And Rev. xxii. 14, 15. "Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as *his* work shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life," &c.—and the words of the text are very decisive—"Every man shall receive the things *done in his own body, according to that he hath done.*" Not according to what Adam hath done, or Christ hath done, but according to what *he* hath done, *in his own body.*

From what has been said, we may learn how to construe many texts of the scripture, which seem, in a measure to clash. For instance ; when it is said, “ By the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified ;” and many others of like import : we are to understand these as speaking of the Law of Works. For as this law will admit of nothing less than perfect obedience, there is no righteousness, but that of Christ, in which we can stand right, in the eye of that law. But when it is said, “ That every one shall be rewarded according to his works, and according to the deeds done in his own body,” &c. we are to understand these, and such like scriptures according to the constitution of the Gospel, or Law of Grace, as the rule of judgment.

We may also learn, Secondly. That they who have repented, believed, turned to God in new obedience, and have persevered therein to the end of their days, shall be judged to everlasting life ; not because their repentance, faith, &c. deserve or merit this : but because God, in his wisdom and goodness, has been pleased, by the gracious constitution of the gospel, to make these things the condition of our interest in the benefits of Christ’s death and

passion. The impenitent unbeliever, as has been observed, will be condemned, both by the law and gospel: and his evil works will properly deserve, what he is condemned to suffer. But the obedient believer, though he shall be acquitted and adjudged to enjoy the heavenly happiness, does not obtain these, by the proper merit of his faith or works, but through these, as a condition, on which the purchase of the Redeemer's blood is suspended.

From what has been said, we may also learn, not only what is to be attributed to the righteousness of Christ, and what to our own righteousness; but also, that the doctrine of justification, through the righteousness of Christ *imputed* to us, is very far from countenancing Antinomian principles, or licentious practices. It can have no such tendency, when viewed in the light, in which I have held it forth. How can it lead to licentiousness, seeing our life, or death at the bar of God, will ultimately turn upon our having performed, or not performed the conditions of the new Law of Grace; which, as you must have seen, make such and such works so absolutely necessary for our being justified in the day of judgment, as are utterly inconsistent with any unholiness, either in heart or life?

Finally, all the laws which were ever given, by God, to man, agree in this, that, without holiness no man shall ever see the Lord.

This is the substance, I believe, of what I delivered on the text abovementioned. If I have repeated some things over and over, you will attribute this to my anxiety for being understood.

These five letters contain the sum of the doctrines which I have held and taught for near thirty years. And I am more and more convinced of their truth and importance; so that I expect to live and die in the faith of them.

Hoping that these letters may answer the end for which I wrote them, I conclude

Yours, &c.

D. JARRATT.

Thoughts on Christian Holiness..

LETTER I.

*SHEWING that the DOCTRINES of IMPUTED
RIGHTEOUSNESS is equally maintained by
ARMINIANS and CALVINISTS.*

February 6, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

YOU were pleased to inform me that, having read my five letters on Justification, &c. you much approved of the doctrine therein contained; but at the same time wished I would write, by way of supplement, my thoughts on christian perfection, or gospel holiness, because you think this would add to their usefulness, and render them more acceptable to many of my readers.

After duly considering the expediency of this, I have now sat down to comply with your request ; and I am the more inclined to do so because I understand that some, contrary to that heaven-born charity, “ Which thinketh no evil,” have endeavored to disseminate among the people, a belief, that my letters were published with an hostile design. I think it therefore necessary in the first place, for the removal of all prejudice as much as possible, to declare that I meant no controversy at all. As far as I know my own heart, my sole intention was, and still is, to throw in my mite towards the instruction of the people at large. But as the credit of this assertion ought not to rest on my bare declaration, I shall proceed to evince, that the sentiments contained in my letters were never controverted by sober Calvinists or Arminians, but have been equally embraced by both sides. This, I trust, will be made evident by the following quotations, from Mr. Baxter, a Calvinist, and Mr. Fletcher, an Arminian. Quotations might be made from divers authors on both sides ; but to avoid prolixity, I shall confine myself to these two.

Indeed I am indebted to Mr. Fletcher, for my quotations from Baxter’s Aphorisms on justification : for I take them from his

preface to his guarded sermon, in the equal check, page 28. The words are, "As there are two covenants with their distinct conditions, so is there a twofold righteousness and both of them absolutely necessary to salvation. Our righteousness of the first covenant is not personal; or consisteth not in any actions performed by us: for we never personally satisfied the law, but it is wholly without us in Christ." "Those only shall be in Christ legally righteous who believe and obey the gospel; and so are in themselves evangelically righteous. Though Christ performed the conditions of the law, and satisfied for our non-performance, yet it is ourselves that must perform the conditions of the gospel. Those two propositions are so clear that I do wonder any able divines should deny them. Methinks they should be articles of our creed, and part of our children's catechism." Who may not see that these words quoted from Baxter and adopted by Fletcher, contain the sum and substance of my five letters? So far was I then from intending any controversy, that I only strove, to the utmost of my ability, to set in a clear light those two propositions, in order to remove all occasion of controversy,

which might arise from men's mistaking one another.

This one quotation might be sufficient ; but as it has become a matter of serious consequence, I shall shew that Mr. Fletcher embraced the same opinion, not by adoption only, but from words of which he is the immediate father.

He says (equal check, page 39.) “ The second covenant then, as the gospel, is a dispensation of free grace and mercy to lost, helpless sinners, who seeing and feeling themselves condemned by the law of innocence, and utterly unable to obtain justification upon the terms of the first covenant, come to a merciful God through Jesus Christ, to seek in him, and from him, those merits and that righteousness, which they have not in themselves : for the Son of God, by the invaluable sacrifice of himself, having suffered the punishment due to all our breaches of the law of works, and by his most holy life, having answered all the demands of the first covenant, God can be just, &c.” Again, page 40, he says, “ Herein consists the great difference between the first and second covenant. Under the first, an absolute unsinning, universal obedience, in our own persons, is required ; and such obedience, in our fal-

len state, we can never perform. Under the second covenant, this obedience to the law of innocence paid by and in our surety, Christ Jesus, when we are united to him, by faith of the operation of God, is accepted as our own ; For as our sins were transferred upon the Redeemer's guiltless head, so his merits are brought home to our guilty souls, by the powerful operation of divine grace, through faith ; and being thus complete in Christ, with respect to the fulfilling of the first covenant, we can rejoice in God, &c.—I say with respect to the fulfilling of the first covenant, to guard against the error of thousands, who vainly imagine, that Christ has fulfilled the terms of the second covenant for us."

In page 42 speaking of a convinced sinner, he says, " This conviction and sense of guilt make the sinner come travelling and heavy laden to Christ, earnestly claiming the rest which he offers to weary souls. Matt. xi. 28. This rest the mourner seeks till the same spirit that had convinced him of sin, convinces also of righteousness, John xvi. 8, that is, shews him the all-sufficiency of the Saviour's righteousness ; to swallow up his former sins and unrighteousness ; and the infinite value of

Christ's meritorious death, to atone for his past unholy life ; enabling him to believe with the heart, and consequently to feel—that he has an interest in the redeemer's *blood and righteousness.*”

Here every man, who is not blinded by prejudice, must see, in these quotations, the identical sentiments of my letters. The *active* as well as *passive* obedience of the redeemer are both held forth, and the virtue of each assigned. But should it be asked ; “Does Mr. Fletcher, any where expressly mention the active and passive obedience of Christ and say that these are imputed to us ?” Yes, he does so, in the most direct terms, in page 45. his words are : “Having thus given you an account of both covenants, and laid before you the condition or term of each, namely, for the first, a sinless and uninterrupted obedience to all the commands of the law—performed by ourselves ; and for the second, a lively faith in Christ——by which faith the virtue of Christ's *active* and *passive* obedience to the law—being *imputed* to us, &c.

After this, that pious and judicious divine proceeds to show, how consentaneous these doctrines are to the articles, homilies, &c. of the church of England, of which

he, as well as myself, was ordained a minister: and then speaks of the beautiful order and exquisite harmony, in which the scheme of salvation, through Christ, is placed by the gospel, in page 62. "The merits and sufferings of Christ," says he, "are the only meritorious cause of our salvation; faith is the only instrumental cause—in the day of conversion. It receives Christ and salvation as the hand of a beggar receives an alms:—and good works are the declarative cause. This Christ alone properly merits, faith alone properly apprehends, and good works alone properly evidence salvation."

I have persued the business of quotation even to a tedious length, that I might as far as possible, remove all prejudices and obstructions out of the way, that if any thing good and worthy of acceptation be contained in what I have written, or shall write, my readers may freely receive the benefit. I could not have pitched on any two divines more proper to answer such a purpose. Baxter was justly esteemed one of the greatest divines, as well as the best of casuists, in his day. By his labours in doctrine, he laid such a foundation of religion, and sowed such seeds of piety, among his flock in Roderminser, as, perhaps, will spring

up and bear fruit as long as the sun and moon shall endure; and his voluminous writings have been abundantly owned and blessed to the conviction, conversion, and edification of thousands, both in Europe and America. As for Fletcher, his great piety and many useful publications, to rescue the pure and holy gospel, from *antino-nian dotages*, have deservedly rendered his works and memory dear to every friend of pure and undefiled religion, and all who wish to know and do all the will of God on earth as angels do in heaven.

I shall conclude with my fervent prayer to Almighty God, that while we admire the divinity and embrace the sentiments of these great ministers, as held forth in the preceeding quotations, we may not forget to imitate their peity, zeal and devotion.

I am your's, &c.

Most respectfully,

D. JARRATT.

P. S. I think it may be useful to add one quotation more which is taken from the sixth volume of Mr. Fletcher's works, page 216. Here he tells us that, "Confounding what God has divided, and divi-

ding what the God of truth has joined, are the two capital stratagems of the god of error: the prince of peace compassionately tempers the doctrines of justice by the doctrines of grace, and instead of the law of innocence [which he has kept and made honourable for us]" mark well these last words, "*the law of innocence which he*" i. e. Christ the prince of peace, *has kept and made honourable for us,*" "has substituted his own evangelical law of repentance, faith, &c."

LETTER II.

Of GOSPEL HOLINESS.

February 16, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

BY Gospel Holiness which some term Christian Perfection, I mean that maturity of grace and universal conformity to the holy will and image of God, which every believer is enjoined to press after, and which fathers in Christ do actually attain under the gospel dispensation. Or, in

other words, it is a ripe, settled and confirmed habit of willing, thinking, speaking and acting according to the evangelical law of Christ. This law, as it contains our Lord's new commandment, is sometimes called the law of love, and sometimes the evangelical law of liberty.

It has been, and still is, my wish to be beneficial to christians of all denominations and persuasions ; and for this purpose I have kept myself from meddling in the disputes which have taken place among them, as much as possible. I am a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church ; and in that church ; I expect to live and die. But as far as I know my own heart, I am a bigot to no particular church, but am equally pleased to see the members of all churches walking as becometh the gospel, and pressing toward the mark of their high calling in Christ Jesus. Now as the doctrine of christian perfection has been matter of great controversy and warm debate in the christian world, it is with reluctance I mention the subject, lest I should seem to depart from that line of conduct, which I have hitherto observed ; and thus prejudice some so far that they might not so kindly receive and profit by my labours as otherwise they might. However, as I have

observed, that many disputes arise from mistaking terms, more than from any real difference of sentiment, so I am verily persuaded that this is the case, in the debates about christian perfection. And I am led to think so, from observing, that many pious Calvinists, in their writings, describe and insist on the very same thing, and call it christian holiness, which Armenians call christian perfection. Though they do not use the same words, yet both of them describe such a proficiency in holiness, which I apprehend might, without any impropriety, be termed, what the apostle calls "Perfecting holiness in the fear of God." It is plain then that the controversy on this point must take its rise from misapprehension of the term. Some when they hear talk of christian perfection, think that the intended meaning is, that a man must be as perfect as God, or as perfect as Christ, or angels in heaven; or as Adam was before the fall, or, at least, as perfect as the Adamic law of innocence required. Now I know not any man that contends for perfection in any of these respects. This would be such an absurdity, that I am surprised, any one could think a man in his senses, can mean any such thing;

especially as the advocates for christian perfection have told us over and over, that they mean no such thing. But as the term gospel holiness is liable to no such exceptions, and is equally used and inculcated by one, as well as the other, I have made choice of it; and what I mean by it you have seen already. I come now to treat more fully on it.

Observe we then, that, in the day of conversion, a sinner, “being justified by faith, has peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He is pardoned and accepted in the beloved. But the christian religion was designed to effect not merely a relative, but a real change in all who cordially embrace it. It was intended to purify and refine nature by grace, and to cleanse us from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that we might *perfect holiness in the fear of God*. This great work is begun in conversion: for at that time the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the holy ghost; the man is born again; all the principles of a new and divine life are infused, and all the seeds of grace and virtue are implanted. But he being as yet only a babe in Christ; and these principles and graces exceedingly feeble and weak, their growth and improvement must be the work and

employment of all his future christian life. So when a child is born into the world, he has all the powers of human nature, though at that time they are in their infancy and weakness ; but by proper nourishment and exercise, from that day he grows and improves both in his corporal and mental faculties, until he arrives at maturity. Similar to this, the christian, from the time of his being justified and made alive to God and endued with gracious habits, by cleaving to Christ, by feeding on the sincere milk of the word, and by exercising himself unto godliness, grows, and thrives, and improves, till he acquires such a confirmed, settled habit of true holiness, and such a maturity of grace and due conformity to the evangelical law of love ; which St. Paul terms, “ a coming to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” Certainly these words of the apostle must signify, some eminent proficiency in holiness and the attainment of such high degrees of grace and love, which accord with the law of Christ, and fit us to become his stated residence, so as to be filled with the most glorious tokens of his presence with us, and favorable acceptance of us. Are we not exhorted to pursue, and encouraged to expect this confirmed habit

of holiness and maturity of grace, by such scriptures as these? “The Lord make you perfect”—“Every one that is perfect shall be as his master”—“Let patience have her perfect work”—“that ye may be perfect”—“perfect and complete in all the will of God”—“Let us go on unto perfection”—“Perfect love casteth out fear: for fear hath torment”—i. e. slavish fear: “He that feareth is not made perfect in love”—“In him verily is the love of God perfected.”

From these and other scriptures of like import, some have contended that there is a sense, in which christians may be perfect; and they define christian perfection to be such a perfection of love, as casteth out slavish, tormenting fear. Or in other words, *to love God with all the heart*. For my own part, I can see no impropriety in this; especially as it is countenanced by so many scripture expressions; but whether the term be proper, or improper, I do not contend, yet sure I am the thing is a most desirable object; and whether it be attainable in this life or not, yet I am confident it will do no man any harm to expect thus to love God, and seek after it with constant and unwearied diligence. And to encourage us to seek and to expect such a

blessing, "God hath given us great and precious promises, that by these we may be made partakers of the divine nature." —And again "Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." In persuing and praying for such an establishment and maturity in grace and universal holiness, we do not act without a precedent. St. Paul and St. Peter have given us an example of praying for the same christian privilege. The former thus prays for the Thessalonians: "The God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God that your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And to encourage them also to pray for this without ceasing, he adds, "Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it." The latter prays for the whole catholic or universal church thus, "But the God of all grace who hath called us, by Jesus Christ, "after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." From the language of this prayer of St. Peter, I have defined the maturity of grace, in an adult believer, to be a pure, stable, vigo-

rous, settled habit of gospel holiness ; or a confirmed habit of willing, thinking, speaking and acting, in conformity to the law of Christ, which is fulfilled by love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

I would speak more fully of this evangelical law, under which believers are, and shew that it is to be considered not merely as a rule of life, but as obligatory on all real christians ; for though, as already shewn, we are justified from all charges of the covenant of works, by the merits of Christ, yet I have also endeavoured to shew (in another place) that our justification in the day of judgment will turn our own obedience to the gospel, or our own evangelical righteousness. This righteousness must be in ourselves : "For" (to use the words of Mr. Baxter) "to affirm that our evangelical or new covenant righteousness is in Christ, and not in ourselves, or performed by Christ, and not by ourselves, is such a monstrous piece of antinomian doctrine, as no man who knows the nature and difference of the covenants can possibly entertain." Bax. Aphor. I say I would enlarge on this, but it would extend the letter beyond due bounds. However, before I conclude this letter, I shall say a

little more concerning the maturity of grace and holiness in adult christians.

First. I do not consider this state to be so angelical and perfect as to admit of no defects or infirmities ; nor is it such a proficiency in holiness, to which nothing can be added. Such a state as this is not for man on earth, nor, perhaps, for saints in heaven. A perfection which admits of no improvement, belongs only to God.

Second. Nor does it consist in a rigorous imposition “ of bodily austerities and voluntary humility ; nor in a gloomy, downcast look ; an awkward carriage, gait or gesture ; nor in a slovenly dress, or clownish behaviour, nor in drawling the words, or speaking with a particular cant, and affected tone of voice.” (See Fletcher’s works, vol. 6. page 126.) Such rigors, voluntary austerities and impositions St. Paul speaks of in Col ii. 23. “ Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship,” that is, self-devised, “ and humility,” that is, an affectation of address, “ and neglecting of the body,” that is, in a severity to the body : which rigors are so far from true humility and mortification, or disposing the mind thereto, that on the contrary, they only serve to puff up men with a vain conceit of their own sanc-

tity ; and therefore it is called “ a dishonorable satisfying of the flesh.” Because, while such severities seem to affect the body, they only tend to self-complacency, ostentation and contempt of others ; which things are as contrary to the will of God and the humble genius of the christian religion, as the grossest sensualities. However, every christian, in the mean while, will find it to be both his duty and interest, to stand afar off from all the gaities, fashions, maxims, customs, vanity, and parade of the world. He will bear in mind that apostolic injunction, “ Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.” No man will ever make any proficiency in religion, who does not observe this non-conformity to the world, much less will he advance to that maturity of grace and gospel holiness I am now speaking of.

Thirdly. As I have negatively described what this state is not, I shall now positively describe in a few more words, what it is, or wherein it consists. This state is well described in that excellent petition in the book of common prayer, which runs thus, “ Almighty God, unto whom all

hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid ; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy holy spirit, that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name through Christ our Lord." A full answer to this prayer will make or constitute an adult christian ; whose heart being cleansed from evil desires and unholy tempers and dispositions, the love of God must fill up all the place. And he that perfectly loves God will hate sin in the same proportion : for sin and God are opposites ; and in the same proportion as he loves God, will he love his holy will and commandments ; the habitual bent of his soul will be turned to do the will of God, and thus will he worthily magnify the name of the Lord, by walking not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

I could dwell with much delight on this subject, but the length of this letter already reminds me of putting an end to it.

That God may cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of this holy spirit, that we may perfectly love him and worthily magnify his holy name, is the sincere prayer of

Dear sir, your friend, &c.

D. JARRATT.

LETTER III.

On the MEANS of HOLINESS.

February 17, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

WHOEVER reads over our blessed Lord's sermon on the Mount, with due care and attention, must discover therein all those heights and depths of christian holiness, for which the advocates for pure and undefiled religion contend:—here he will find that our Saviour requires, in all his followers, such profound humility, as sinks the soul to the dust, in the deepest self-abasement: such meekness, patience and charity, as no injuries can overcome, no indignities can exasperate, no insults or affronts can provoke: a charity which suffereth long and is kind, breaking forth in all directions, and comprehending the whole human race; enemies as well as friends; tendering and regarding the welfare of the souls and bodies of others, even as our own: and also such regard to God, and respect to his holy

laws, that, rather than offend, will pluck out the right eye, and cut off the right hand; that is, part with every thing that is nearest, dearest, and most gainful in this world.

Nor are these precepts of our Saviour to be considered merely as rules, advices or counsels, which christians may regard or neglect without harm or hazard. No, Sir, they are gospel precepts, obligatory on all the disciples of Christ; nor have we any warrant, that I know of, to expect eternal happiness, unless we conscientiously and sincerely comply with them all. And in case of non-compliance, we are threatened with the loss of heaven. “Whosoever,” says this divine Teacher, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so,” whether by precept or example, “He shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.” That is, he shall have no part in that kingdom. If therefore we wish to enter into heaven and glory, we must aspire after a due conformity to these precepts. Such a perfection as this, not only may be attained, but it is the duty of every believer to attain it. And the means whereby it is to be attained, I now proceed to point out.

Here I recollect, a promise I made you of shewing, that the doctrine of imputed righteousness is greatly conducive to growth in grace, and that maturity of gospel holiness, which some call *christian perfection*.

As I wish to be as brief as possible, I will not go back farther, than just to remind you, that being justified by faith, we have peace with God, and are delivered from the curse and condemnatory sentence of the law, only by the righteousness of Christ imputed. At the same time the habits of grace are infused, and sanctification is begun. The love of God is shed abroad in our heart, and we love him because he first loved us. But this affection of love, at this time, though it may seem to flash and kindle into raptures, is yet weak and feeble. We follow Christ indeed, but chiefly for the loaves.—And yet, it may be, while those flashes of affection and flaming raptures continue, the new convert, though he may hear and believe the necessity of a deeper work, gets little or no ground; because he does not, in reality see and feel that necessity; having at present all he wishes for. As a sinner, when under conviction, is made to feel the need of a Saviour's righteousness, before he submits to

it ; so must a believer feel the necessity of a deeper work, before he will properly apply for it. The Lord has promised his people the blessing of a new and clean heart, but at the same time says, “that for all these things, he will be enquired of by the house of Isarel to do it for them.” Blessings are given in answer to fervent prayer ; and fervent prayer is preceded by a feeling sense of want. It is therefore usual, I believe, for our kind benefactor to withdraw, or abate those rapturous feelings and flights of the passions, that the believer may know himself, and be sensible of his wants. As soon as he misses these fervors of the affections, he is apt to be distressed, and he knows not what is the matter. If satan does not now reason him out of all his confidence, he still continues in the use of all the means of grace, and narrowly looks, both inward and outward, to find out why it is not with him as in months past, and sooner or later it pleases God to give him such a discovery of sin’s remains, and of such tempers and dispositions contrary to the divine will, as, before he could not believe had any place in his heart. And now what has he to do ? If he does not cleave to that only foundation on which he first

built when by faith he was first justified, he is thrown into a sea of perplexity. He is surprised and alarmed, and ready to fear that all his religion was a dream, a mere delusion. The devil now strikes in with redoubled fury and asks, "*Where is now thy God?* Is it possible for one so vile and polluted to be in the favor of God who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity or look upon sin." Now, if his justification depended more or less upon any thing he had done or could do, had felt or could feel,* he founders like a ship at sea, and sinks into the ocean of doubt, and fear, and despondency; his peace is gone, and he thinks more of going back and beginning all anew, than of going forward to greater degrees of holiness and proficiency in grace. Without peace there is no going forward one step; therefore in this situation a man can make no progress in the divine life; and till peace is restored such a mourner is set fast. But if he continues to struggle and this should be the language of his soul, "O Lord I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again towards thy holy temple," the Lord will restore comforts

* I mean, as the meritorious cause of his justification.

unto such a mourner, by turning or directing him to the same foundation of peace, on which he first laid hold in the day of his espousals to Christ, cleaving to this with all his heart, as the sole ground for his acceptance, his peace is regained and established ; and he is at liberty to make advancements in holiness : for now he can face the enemy and boldly say, “ I am freely justified, not by works of righteousness which I have done : I am accepted only in Christ and by believing in him that justifieth the ungodly. I am the righteousness of God in him, who was made sin for me ; in him am *I found, not having my own righteousness, as the ground of my justification* more or less ; but that which is by the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” And relying on and holding fast this, he not only finds his peace renewed but love and joy in the Holy Ghost flowing into his soul, in streams more silent, but yet more deep and copious than before. And now having fixed the foot of faith on this firm, unshaken rock, he sees the work he has to do, even to root out and expel from his heart all God’s enemies and his own. And now let Satan try to destroy his peace, he can answer,

 Tempt as you will, my soul repels,
 And like a bounding hart, flies home.

Of such great importance then, is the imputed righteousness of Christ to a believer throughout his whole life, and especially in the most perilous stages of his christian warfare. To strike at this doctrine then, is to strike at the root of gospel holiness, and cut short all improvement in grace and conformity to the image of God.

Most believers, I am apt to think, who have ever resolved to live up to their privileges, have found the truth of what I have here said, by their own experience. They know, that without peace, they could get no ground ; and that they could attain no solid peace but in the doctrine of justification by faith without the deeds of the law. For a more full and judicious illustration of this important point, I refer you to Mr. Wesley's excellent sermon on ii. Cor. ii. 11. "*We are not ignorant of his devices.*" 3d vol. page 193.

Again, when a believer feels a necessity for a deeper work, it is of great consequence that he firmly believe, that a maturity of grace and gospel holiness is not only attainable and promised, but also commanded. For though as I have already said, love is the most powerful spring to steady and uniform obedience, yet as long as they continue in this world, believers

will stand in need of precepts as well as promises. They ought therefore to read and consider both, that they may be stimulated by the one, and animated by the other.

But when the believer is firmly persuaded that such a maturity of grace is attainable, and that the attainment of it is both his duty and his privilege, because it is both commanded and promised, then let him seek it by faith, I mean, let him plead with ardor and constancy the great and precious promises of the gospel respecting sanctification and holiness ; believing that what God has promised he is both able and willing to perform. Let him pray with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with perseverance : but let him ask in faith nothing wavering or doubting, as if what God had promised was too much for him to bestow.

I find this letter also swelling under my hand, therefore these few hints must suffice. And for such as wish to see this part of the subject handled more at large, I would refer them to Mr. Fletcher's address to imperfect believers, 6th vol. of his works, page 253.

I shall say nothing about that celebrated question, " Whether the maturity of grace

in an adult believer be gradual or instantaneous?" As perhaps upon the whole it may be more curious than useful; not that I would have any one so to distrust the goodness and power of God, as not to believe "That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And sure I am that I have found the ardent desires of my heart often to breathe in the following lines,

"O that I now that rest might know,
Believe and enter in;
Now saviour, now the pow'r bestow,
And let me cease from sin."

Thus have I complied with your request, as fully as the narrowness of the limits prescribed would allow. I doubt not but these letters stand in need of correction, as I have not had leisure to go over them a second time. But being convinced of the soundness and utility of the sentiments therein contained, I send them to you just as they are. And should you think proper to send them to the press, I pray God to accompany them with his blessing.

I am your's most respectfully,

D. JARRATT.

What follows would have been omitted, had I not found that the misrepresentations published years ago in Dr. Coke's Journal, still remain in print, without any public recantation. It seems concessions were made privately, but they should have been as public as the offence—*Violence* was no part of Mr. Jarratt's character, but on the contrary *moderation* in all things. The following are his sentiments, freely and fully on the subject:—

Virginia, August 31, 1790.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

YOUR favour by Mr. J. and your last by Mr. T. came safe to hand, with which I am well pleased. I am determined, as much as lieth in me to live peaceably with all men, and whatever squibs may be thrown at me I shall endeavor to let them *pass by me as the idle wind which I respect not*. I hope you will endeavor to do the same. For should we attend to all the little shifts and stratagems of parties and party catchers we might have more than enough to do; and in the end, perhaps only injure ourselves and wound our own peace and repose.

Dr. Coke's journal, I hope to treat with becoming contempt. But should I light on him in a proper place I might try to convict him of sin, or else furnish him with matter for a new Journal. His little soul, I believe, was exasperated at me, for laughing at his episcopal credentials, which he vainly drew out upon me, with Mr. Wesley's hand and seal annexed forsooth. The sight to me was truly farcical and lu-

dicrous in the extreme—I could not forbear smiling—But my pleasantry, on veiwing the parchment, was too serious a matter for the doctor ; his pride could not brook it—and so he has shewn his spleen by holding me up in his journal. He intended it, no doubt, for a gibbet—and I expect he would have done as much hurt to my body as he intended to my reputation, could it have been done as easily ; I mean by publishing *Falsities*. Ifreely forgive him, and I pray God to forgive him, and cause him to know himself.

I am as you truely suppose, well pleased that a spirit of liberation is prevailing. As God has numbered me among the *Free*, I wish it may be consistent with the deep and wise schemes of his Providence to open a way for the freedom of the whole human race ; and especially that the Africans in the United States of America may see an end of their bondage, as soon as it may be consistent with public and private utility. Slavery, as thousands of the slaves are treated, is indeed *shocking to humanity*. But whether slavery in itself, *be inconsistent with the dictates of reason and religion*, is what I have not as yet, after the most impartial examination been able to discover. I dare not say it is inconsistent with *these*. I say, I dare not pronounce it inconsistent, lest I

should reproach my Maker, who as you know blessed his friend Abraham with abundance of that property, and tolerated the same among the Jews. Some have pretended to point out a distinction between the different dispensations, and from thence infer, that what was allowed as consistent with the dictates of reason and religion in the Jewish, is not so under the christian oeconomy : but I never could see the propriety of the reasoning. The dictates of reason and religion, (I mean not outward forms of religion, but pure morality and the love of God and man) do not fluctuate. There can be no alteration in these, let the outward dispensation be what it will.—But notwithstanding this is my faith and ever has been ; yet I am no advocate for slavery. Slavery, as it is practised in general is most abhorrent to my mind. I wish its abolition. And if it be the design of heaven that the Africans here should be a free people ; and the wheels of providence have begun (as I hope) to roll that way, I have not a doubt but ways and means will be pointed out, in proper time to effect this purpose, though the united wisdom of America, at present, is unequal to the task. In the mean while, I doubt not, but my indispensable duty is to preach the duties incumbent on all stations and relations in life,

as I find them marked in holy writ. With
best respects to you and your's,

I remain, your Friend and Brother,

D. JARRATT.

Virginia, March 3, 1794.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

THOUGH I have not had a letter from you since my last—yet being favoured with an opportunity by the *little man*, I must write a few lines. With regard to religious affairs in general I refer you to *him*, who is both intelligent and communicative. I hope to have some respite from methodistical tongues for a while, as they seem to have work enough to do among themselves. O'Kelly does great things in the devisive way and I dare say he will make *Asbury's Mitre* set very uneasy on his head, so as to give sensible pain to his heart, and it may be to such a degree, that he may sincerely wish Dr. Coke had never given him a *Mitre* at all. Indeed I never expected that *Mitre* would set easy for any considerable length of time, as it was but a cobbled piece of work at first—and Dr. Coke was the principal agent. The divisions and animosities now subsisting are greater, perhaps, than you can conceive, and yet all these may be but the beginnings of sorrow. In

a word I have seen and heard so much of the party zeal, party interest and party spirit of the people called Methodists, and the nefarious methods made use of to put down one and set up another, that I really doubt whether there would be any propriety in giving them the epithet of a religious society. Not that I doubt but there are numbers of good people among them. What the end of these things may be, I know not. The little man will inform you of more than I can write.

I suppose you have heard that a Mr. ***** formerly a minister of our church, has been canonically degraded and read out. This was done in the course of the winter just past. I do not expect there will be any convention in Richmond this year, as the small pox has been raging in that city for some time, and I am told, about two hundred have lost their lives by it.

I am become like a sparrow sitting alone upon the house top but I still try to do a little, though in much discouragement—but in dependance on the Lord, I shall still be casting my bread upon the waters, hoping to find it after many days—I have, I thank God, no party interest to serve—my view is the conversion of souls to God, and to promote the interests of our dear Redeemer. And if God will favor me with suc-

cess, I hope I shall be thankful, and ascribe all the honor and glory to him only.

I find myself more and more dead to the world—indeed I am sorry when necessity calls me to take one thought about it—I wish to be wholly devoted to God, and that all the labors of my head and heart and tongue may be for his glory and the salvation of souls. But as I cannot ride about and undergo the fatigue, as I once could—I have confined myself more to study and writing, hoping that, by such sermons and tracts as have been and shall be published, good may be done to some, whom I have never seen, or could see—not only in this century, but in centuries yet to come. I hope you will assist in spreading my printed works as much as you can. I hope you have got the first volume of my sermons, or will soon get it; you will there see with your eyes, what you have heard with your ears from my lips, and which by the blessing of God, has been rendered salutary to many in hearing and I trust will have some good effects on a number of readers.

I am your's, most respectfully,

D. JARRATT.

☞ This letter was omitted till all the others were printed, and pains taken to procure and re-examine Dr. Coke's Journal, and would have been omitted altogether, but being informed that some persons were prejudiced against Mr. Jarratt's sermons on account of the Journal, it was thought proper to add it, though the work was already finished.

Virginia, April 15, 1790.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

LAST Sunday I received your's, favored by Mr. Turnbull. Your complaint respecting the unfrequency of my letters to you would be too well founded, was a proper medium of conveyance established between us; but, through want of that, several letters, now out of date, lie by me, which I never had an opportunity of sending. One letter, which is very long, I gave a certain Mr. Johnson, a quondam Methodist Preacher, who intended to call at your house, in his way to Bishop White. In hope that you have or will get *that*, I shall try to make *this* the shorter. For should I write only the tenth part of what I wish to communicate to you, and should communicate had I the pleasure of seeing you, I should write a volume instead of a letter. I hardly know where to begin; what to say, and what to leave unsaid.

With respect to myself and family, we are tolerably well: thanks to God. I wish to be more holy, and to have a more single eye and pure intention to please God and glorify him in all things I speak or do. I want to love God with all my heart and every soul as myself, and never feel anger or prejudice to any of the human race. I endeavor to do a little still for the salvation of souls; but I find it is but *little* I can do now, even in comparison to what I once did. Religion is lively in some places, but few souls have lately been brought in: indeed I have not heard of any for some months, as I now recollect. Great strifes and contentions have pervaded the societies, about liberation. I know not how they will terminate. I don't concern about them. Father O'Kelly has lately published an essay on the subject. It is, no doubt, a well meant effort; but is a jumbled spot of work—though it may not be the less efficacious on that account. Perhaps you have seen the essay, as it was published in the north. His glosses on Scripture are very inaccurate: indeed he seems to have so little understanding of Scripture, that he darkens ra-

ther than illustrates those passages he has undertaken to explain. However he is a good man, and valiant for what he judges to be the truth. And it must be confessed, that many melancholy truths are too justly depicted in that pamphlet. Slaves are treated, in America, so inhumanly, in thousands of instances, and by thousands of masters, as must be very abhorrent to every tender, reflecting mind. I hope and believe the day of their release has begun to dawn; and I lament it as a misfortune that the faults already committed are too strong to admit of any speedy amendment. Their numbers are so great that a general manumission would be the utter ruin of the country. I leave the matter to the wisdom of the legislature; and I trust they will undertake it as soon as they can, and pursue the business by such gradual and prudential means, as shall produce the desired effect, without any destructive convulsions, clamours or disunion among the states. Lord hasten the period.

You must have seen the Armenian Magazine, published by Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury. In that publication, I think, there are many excellent pieces on the subject of General Redemption. The synod of Dort and the decrees thereof are placed in such a striking point of light, that I wonder every thinking man is not shocked thereat. The examination of Tilenus is a master-piece. I admire Mr. Wesley's original sermons, printed in that magazine. The diction, &c. shew a strength of genius not to be impaired by the wastes of time. They betray nothing of *second childhood*, except the larding them with so much Latinity, may appear to savour of it. I was pleased and edified by Mr. Asbury's Journal. I saw so much of what he seemed to be, when he used to visit me, that I found my affections towards him very strong. Dr. Coke's Journal is very far from being equal to his; nay I think his narrations, for the most part, very trifling and not worth reading. He does not discover the man of judgment at all, in that performance. I think it was very weak and imprudent in him, to give such extraordinary characters of, and bestow such high encomiums upon some of the preachers and others, who are yet living, and who may be too much tickled and elated thereby—I don't suppose them to be out of the power of temptations of that sort. I think I discover in him, by his relations and characters, that he is a man, who walks more by sense and feeling than by faith and truth. Old Martin Key, he says, has an elder son, who is a child of Satan like his father. But

Tandy Key is a fine fellow. James Morris, not having an opportunity of publishing his appointments, by reason of his wife's indisposition, is a dreadful fellow, worthy of immediate suspension. Abundance of frogs he saw in one place, and horses tyed to trees in another. Mr. Pettegrew, who, next to myself, had befriended the Methodists more than any other clergyman in America, is compared to *a little chicken*, &c. &c. Are not such things too trifling for a D. D. or L. D. or even for a B. A. If you have read this magazine, as I expect you have, you must have observed the gibbet he has made of my name; and I suppose he intended that it should be gibbeted in *secula seculorum*. But, you know me better, than to suppose any thing the little creature could say of me, could move me much. I judged from his character of others, that he was too much under the influence of sensations, and walked more by sense than by faith and truth, but I could not be sure of it, till I read what he was pleased to insert respecting me. Then I was sure my judgment was not astray. For if there be not five falsities or misrepresentations, in the five lines, written, respecting me, in page 342, I am, as Falstaff says, *a shotten herring*. I will point them out to you, and I know you can believe me. After saying he met me at Roanoak, he says, first, "*That I went with him eight miles.*" I did not go one step with him. Second, "*We talked largely about the minutes on slavery.*" The whole conversation, on that subject, would not have taken up three minutes time. Third, he says, "*I would not be persuaded.*" I don't know that he used one word to persuade me. Fourth, The secret is, says he, that I have twenty-four slaves. God knows me better, and so do you. Fifth, He intimates that I mightily oppose their rules. Every one that knows me, knows this to be so far from the truth, that it was quite the reverse. When I parted from the doctor at that time, I did not mistrust I had offended him, and expected he would have called on me when he came near my house. Instead of this, he passed by along the road over the bridge, without vouchsafing to call, and makes this Journal upon it, page 392: "I passed by the house of Mr. Jarratt, a violent assertor of the justice and propriety of negro slavery." Did you ever discover me to be such a violent man, as to authorise any one to make *violence* a distinguishing characteristic of me? The truth is, the little man read the minutes to me, and asked my opinion of them. I told him I was no friend to slavery; but however

I did not think the minutes proper, for two reasons. First, The disturbance it would make and the opposition it would meet with in the societies. Second, He ought not to make a disputable matter a positive term of communion. And as he was a stranger in the land, I told him the spirit of Virginia would not brook force, and probably I gave him some advice on the matter, which I suppose the bishop looked upon as an insult—but I did it in the integrity of my heart, without any suspicion it would offend the gentleman so highly. But I care not one straw for what he has Journalised about me—but thought it not improper to say something on it to you. I believe he has got no credit by it, even among several of the church, over which he is overseer.

I am sorry to tell you that the doctrines of the gospel are not so well understood and preached in this state as I could wish. The active obedience of Christ and imputed righteousness, are exploded by some, which is to sap the very foundation of the gospel and the sinner's hope. I trust my making a stand against this, has in some measure put a stop to it—though Father O'Kelly has fallen into the error, and I fear he will not be easily checked in his career—he is a very positive blade.

You will think by this time I have forgot my purpose of making this letter short. Indeed so many things crowd into my mind, when writing to you, that though writing is become irksome to me, I can't stop soon.

I am pleased to hear that your son Charles learns well, and discovers a retentive memory. I hope you will have joy in him and the rest of your little ones. We give our love to you and Mrs. Coleman; and tell the children Dad-da Jarratt wants to see them.

I am your sincere friend,

DEVEREUX JARRATT.

~~MS.~~ K.S.
JL



